



Early Learning Initiative

FOR WISCONSIN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Early Learning Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries

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INTRODUCTION

WISCONSIN'S EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVE FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The *Early Learning Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries* was developed in response to Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster's challenge to identify ways that all divisions in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction can help implement her New Wisconsin Promise. (The full text of the Promise is included as Appendix 1 of this document.) The intended outcome of this initiative is not to get children reading, writing and doing math "early" or "faster." Rather the outcome is to help assure that all children start school ready to learn. The role of public libraries in this process falls within the primary mission most libraries have of providing information and resources, as well as programs for children. This guide is intended to help public librarians understand the value of the many things they do for young children, within the context of recent educational and infant brain development research. They can then put elements of the research into practice in their programs, in the information they make available to parents and day care providers, and the readers' advisory services they offer. Beginning at birth, public libraries can play a role in helping parents and day care providers assure all children have the experiences they will need to learn to read by third grade, graduate from high school, and become life-long readers who not only know how to read, but enjoy reading.

The suggestions in this guide may help public librarians identify minor adjustments they can make in what they already do. Public librarians can then make even better use of their resources and time, and better target their efforts to reach the parents and day care providers who most need the information and services. These changes will in turn help them justify their efforts in fostering early learning to their governing boards and funding bodies.

This Initiative started with a state Library Leadership Conference on Early Childhood in March 2003. Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton welcomed attendees to the Conference. Elaine Czarnecki and Gilda Martinez from the Center for Reading Excellence at Johns Hopkins University presented their research on ways public libraries can include more readiness skills in their preschool programming. Attendees also heard presentations on infant brain development, current grant projects related to early learning in Wisconsin public libraries, including one on the award winning program by the Milwaukee Public Library, "Books To Go."

The Leadership Conference was followed by a series of regional presentations on infant brain development, the importance of the birth-to-five-years on school success, and demonstrations of techniques and materials to use with infant programming. The sessions were developed through the cooperation of the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, CESA District Early Childhood Consultants, the Child Care Information Center of the Department of Workforce Development, Early Childhood Consultants at the Department of Public Instruction, some local school districts, the University of Wisconsin Extension in Wausau, and the regional public library systems throughout Wisconsin.

The culminating event was a fall pre-conference collaboration between the Division and the Youth Services Section (YSS) of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) in November, 2003. YSS hosted the pre-conference as part of the WLA's annual conference. Sue McCleaf Nespeca, of Kid Lit Plus, presented a day-long program called "Raising Literate Children Begins at Birth." The program focused on the importance of early learning, and included resource suggestions and demonstrations of techniques used in infant and toddler programming.

Much of what good parents, early childhood educators, and librarians have been doing all along with babies, toddlers and preschool children are the very activities that research now indicates are most needed. Research results explain why these activities and experiences promote early learning and provide scientific validation for them. Advances in medical imaging, especially of the brain, have powerful new tools available to early childhood researchers.

Some parents and educators eager to apply the early research began campaigns to make "smarter babies" and to get babies to do things "earlier." Some used techniques that were not appropriate or helpful to infant development. In recent years a more reasoned approach has emerged that indicates a stable, loving environment in which the baby's basic needs are consistently met, is what is most needed to foster normal brain development. A commonly used motto is "Einstein didn't use flash cards."

Creating a home or day care environment in which babies, toddlers, and preschoolers will gain the readiness skills they need to start school ready to learn does not require a lot of money. Core needs beyond

a loving and safe environment, are enough nutrition, clothing, housing, and access to medical care to keep them healthy. Common objects around the home can become learning materials for young children. Expensive toys and equipment are not necessary. Public libraries often have toys and learning materials, as well as books, that parents can use with their children when they visit, or perhaps even to take home. Parents may need to know what activities are helpful to the early learning process. Parents may not know how important it is for them to smile at and touch their children lovingly in order to help their brains develop normally. They may not realize simple loving activities are critical to school success.

Public libraries are often in a better position than public schools to reach parents with children under the age of three, especially if the family does not have other children in school. They may provide outreach programs in neighborhoods with high concentrations of families living in poverty, or families who use English as a second language. Public libraries often have contacts with social service agencies serving very young children such as Head Start and Even Start, Women Infant and Child (WIC) nutrition sites, and programs for teen parents. Public libraries also often partner with local literacy agencies to provide services to parents in jails and prisons. The outreach efforts of most schools do not extend this far into the local neighborhoods and do not typically begin until the children start school.

From 1998 to 2000 Westat, Inc. conducted a study entitled *Assessment of the Role of School and Public Libraries in Support of Educational Reform* for the U.S. Department of Education. One paper written as part of that study was done by Steven Herb, with the Education Library at Penn State and Sara Willoughby-Herb, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Rowland School for the Very Young. The authors argue that because public libraries have historically worked with young children and are often at the hub of community-wide efforts, there is a natural partnership between public libraries and efforts to improve school readiness. They point out that public libraries identified their role in school readiness when they included the "Preschoolers Door To Learning" as one of eight major goals in the Public Library Association's (PLA) *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures* (McClure et al. 1987). They further note that training parents to do literacy activities at home was one of numerous suggestions in the *Kids Can't Wait* report prepared for the Second White House Conference on Library and Information Services in 1990. Their paper explores the many reasons that public libraries have a significant role in helping prepare young children for a successful start in school.

Public libraries have demonstrated their dispositions and abilities to collaborate, to be resourceful, to be adaptable, and to work within a range of communities. Public libraries have been, and continue to be, engaged in the best practices known to the early childhood education field while carrying out their commitment to working with children and their families in ongoing programs, as well as seeking out unserved children and their families. Furthermore, because of their missions to serve all children, as well as their goals for training and recruiting staff, public libraries are unique among public education service providers. The public library is often the only agency poised to reach those children not being reached by various educational programs (e.g., Head Start and early intervention). As Dengel states in her article on providing library outreach to child care providers (1994, 39), "If, as the saying goes, it takes a whole village to raise a child, then the library should be the hub of that village."

This Wisconsin publication pulls together elements of the various training sessions, identifies the primary targeted groups of parents for the initiative, gives background information on how libraries can include a variety of readiness skills, and provides suggestions for infant and toddler programming ideas. The programming section includes movement and fingerplay activities adjusted for children who cannot independently control their movements and fingers. It also includes reproducible handouts for parents who may have trouble reading. These handouts are written at an approximate fourth grade reading level. Translations in Spanish are also included. These materials may be reproduced by any public library, but libraries are asked to include the credit line for the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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Part 1

Why Public Libraries Promote Early Learning

THE NEW WISCONSIN PROMISE

When Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster took office, she promised to work toward improvements in education which she outlined in her *New Wisconsin Promise*. The common goal is to “ensure the opportunity of a quality education for every child. The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) in addressing goals of the *New Wisconsin Promise* developed, the *Early Learning Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries*, which started in 2003. This initiative addresses two of the Superintendent’s goals:

- Closing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students or children of color and their peers.
- Shared responsibility—increasing parental and community involvement in our schools and libraries to address teenage literacy, drop-outs, and truancy.

Two fundamental issues must be addressed to help implement these elements of the New Wisconsin Promise. The first is, what must be done to ensure that children enter school with the skills they need to make them ready and eager to succeed? The second is, what must be done to guarantee children gain the academic skills, as well as intellectual and emotional foundations they need to take them to a successful high school experience and through graduation? The primary focus of this initiative addresses factors that can help ensure children success when they start school. However, one of the targeted parent groups is teen parents. Efforts to reach teen parents may result in them doing more to help their babies beginning at birth and thus break the cycle of illiteracy with the new generation.

Why the Earliest Years Are Critical to School Success

In recent years there has been increasing awareness of how the human brain develops and how experiences beginning at birth affect a child’s success or failure once she enters the school system. A report published in 2001 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the National Center for Children in Poverty estimates that more than one-third of the nation’s kindergarteners do not have the skills necessary to learn when they arrive at school for the first time. Research in various areas of early learning and development indicates school success depends as much on what the child experiences and learns before the age of three as it does on the skills learned between the ages of three and five.

If children are expected to be reading by third grade, public policy must support a child’s needs beginning at birth. The needs of older babies and toddlers must also be addressed if progress is expected in reducing high school truancy and drop-out rates. Attention must be given to babies and toddlers who live in poverty, especially those who are children of color, whose parents use English as a second language, and whose parents are incarcerated, if progress is to be made to reduce the achievement gap between these highest-risk children and their peers.

Research shows the benefits of excellence in education begin as the child is born and continue through later development. Dr. Arthur Reynolds, a researcher at the University of Wisconsin, has done work that indicates this investment of resources for very young children can be justified in cost-benefit terms. His findings demonstrate that for every dollar spent on high-quality early education programs, there was a return in future savings in terms of reduced costs for special education, delinquency, crime control, welfare benefits, and lost taxes. In addition the results of a new High/Scope Perry Preschool Project follow-up study released its report in 2004. The study followed up on adults who had been studied as preschool children forty years ago. This year’s study determined an economic benefit of approximately \$17 for each dollar spent on early education for at-risk children from Ypsilanti, Michigan. The bulk of the return came from lower rates of imprisonment, taxes on participants’ higher earnings, and savings from reduced reliance on public assistance.

What babies and toddlers need most to foster their intellectual development, both at home and in day care settings, is nurturing, bonding, and healthy relationships with the adults who care for them. In addition, they need adequate food and clothing, as well as access to health and medical care services. It is now known that academic learning is closely tied to the emotional development, or lack of it, in the earliest years. The elements of early childhood programs that focus on social and emotional development are just as important, or more important, than those that focus on language skills and cognitive development. Studies indicate children who have attended high-quality early childhood programs do

better academically, have better social skills, and are likely to stay in school and graduate. They are also less likely to be placed in special education classes or become teen parents.

Children who come to school ready for success must have solid social and emotional foundations built from birth that give them a sense of self-esteem and confidence. This confidence helps them perceive themselves as capable of accomplishment. They approach new learning situations, even those that are challenging, with a belief that they can succeed and with a willingness to try. Children who come to school without having their emotional needs met as young children are likely to be unwilling to attempt challenges. Their lack of self confidence and undeveloped social skills can limit their ability to be successful at school. Social and emotional difficulties lead to behavior problems at school that put these children at high risk of school failure in the early years, poor educational outcomes in their teen years, and eventually are likely to lead to difficulties in the workplace when they are adults. Research also indicates poverty increases the risk that children will demonstrate more behavioral problems and will lack social and emotional development. Intervention beginning at birth for children at risk can have a positive life-long impact. Waiting to intervene even until the child is four, is usually too late.

Language and communication skills begin at birth and are core to many readiness skills. The vocabulary and language skills children bring with them when they start school depend on their language experiences in infancy and as toddlers. Children entering school with limited vocabularies and experience with conversation are usually not able to catch up to children who start school with extensive vocabularies, conversation skills, and other experiences with language. Research indicates language experience before the age of three is an excellent predictor of reading ability in third grade.

The focus of the *Early Childhood Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries* is the role public libraries can play in helping address the needs of children birth to five, with special appreciation for the impact the first three years of a child's life have on future school success. Educators recognize that intervention is most effective when started as early as possible, ideally in infancy. Public libraries are in a position to help reach the children and parents most at risk. This resource guide is intended to help them with their efforts.

There are four primary methods public libraries can use to help children enter school ready to succeed:

- Get information to targeted groups of parents with children under the age of three, and their early childhood providers, who are least likely to know how important these years are to future school success.
- Provide educational training opportunities and programming resources for child care providers and early childhood educators, on infant and child learning and development through age five.
- Modify library programs for children ages three to five to include more readiness skills.
- Provide developmentally appropriate programs for infants and toddlers in addition to programs for preschoolers, ages three to five years.

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FAMILIES TARGETED BY THE EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVE

The DLTCL's Early Learning Initiative targets several groups of preschool children and those who care for them:

- Teen parents
- Parents who use English as their second language
- Parents in jails and prisons
- Parents with young children who live in poverty
- Care providers for children in any of these categories, including grandparents

Targeting Teen Parents

The results of a 2004 study by the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC) on the impact of public library early literacy programs recommends public libraries target teen parents to help them understand the importance of early literacy. The study indicates that public library efforts to educate parents on the importance of early learning can be extremely effective with teen parents. Teen parents tended to lag behind older parents initially in how often they use early literacy behaviors with their children. Teen parents made substantial improvements as a result of participation in the program. (A summary of the PLA report is included as Appendix 3 in this document.)

Teen parents significantly increased book sharing time with their children during the study. Their increased use of the library exceeded gains by all the other parent groups. Teen parents of two and three year-olds outpaced all other parent groups in gains that involved asking their children general questions throughout the day.

Some organizations that can help public libraries reach teen parents are identified below. A librarian can arrange to go to such programs at least once a quarter or semester and talk to teens who are about to become parents or who already have a baby. Teen parents may not know that reading and talking to infants are important elements of early learning. At the session the librarian can talk about the relationship between school success and language development and explain that books are important tools to foster good language development. Librarians can encourage parents to begin reading books as soon as their baby is born.

Librarians can demonstrate how to hold a baby and read at the same time, suggest ways to watch the baby for clues that indicate the timing is right for play time and reading, and suggest appropriate library books and recorded music the parents might use with their child. Publicity should include images of young men and women with their babies and a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Organizations that can help connect public librarians with teen parents include:

- Public high schools—especially in large school districts that often have alternative programs for teen parents.
- Alternative high schools—some may include teens who are parents.
- Social services programs for teen parents—some may have meetings that the librarian could attend.
- Women Infant and Child (WIC) programs—some programs may be willing to organize a meeting for the public library that would include their teen clients or allow librarians to visit with parents in their waiting areas.
- Lamaze birthing classes—some programs may have classes just for teen parents.
- Teen shelters, group homes, or other alternative housing operated by a social service or correctional facility—many of these programs are likely to include teen parents and may welcome a visit by a public librarian.
- Social service agencies or religious organizations in larger communities that operate housing for expectant teen mothers or for teen mothers and their children—these programs may welcome public library outreach efforts.

Targeting Parents Who Use English as Their Second Language

While some parents in Wisconsin are bi-lingual or multi-lingual and use English fluently, one of the targeted groups for this project is parents who do not speak, read, and/or write English very well. It is unlikely that parents who do not speak English well will come to the public library unless they are encouraged and supported by an agency with which they are already familiar. Often these parents have an economic disadvantage because they cannot find work that pays well without speaking English. They may have little education, or may be illiterate in their first language.

Parents who do not read well, or do not read in English, may come from a culture in which written language was not used extensively, such as the Hmong, Cambodians, and Laotians. Hispanics are the fastest growing minority group in Wisconsin. Most Latino families come from Central or Latin American countries, especially Mexico. Many come to avoid crushing poverty in their homelands with little formal education. These parents are unlikely to be familiar with the services of a public library and may not realize the services are free. Their fear of all government agencies may make them reluctant to go independently into a public library. Since they may not be able to read or speak English well, they probably will not be able to find materials they want without assistance. Often they are unlikely to find a staff person who speaks their language and thus cannot ask questions. If the parents do not use the public library, they probably won't allow their children to use it.

The findings of the PLA/ALSC study have implications for serving parents who use another language. (Some of the results are included in Appendix 3.) The study only reported on parents who spoke Spanish, but inferences can be generalized to parents who speak any language other than English in the home. The study indicated that appropriate outreach to Hispanic parents can have a significant impact.

At the beginning of the program Hispanic parents used some literacy behaviors less frequently than non-Hispanic parents. At the end of the study, Hispanic parents lagged significantly in encouraging children to name objects in books and in asking their children general questions at the start of the program. A thirty percent increase in the percentage of Hispanic parents with children under the age of two increased time spent sharing books with their children. There was also the same percentage increase in terms of the number of library visits made by Hispanic parents of four-and-five year-olds. The Hispanic group also increased the number of parents who asked their children to name objects in a book and increased the number of general questions they asked their children.

In their comments Hispanic parents described difficulty reading books to their children in English. After the sessions, they reported "talking the pictures" in Spanish even if the books were written in English. They sang in Spanish, and mixed Spanish and English when they read to their children. They expressed concern that their children retain their native language. They also said they want their children to be ready for a school where they would be required to use English. Among the organizations that may be able to assist libraries in making contacts with these families are:

- School districts—especially when the district offers English as a Second Language (ESL) classes
- Specialized social service organizations that serve and support particular ethnic groups such as Hmong associations, United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS).
- Church and religious outreach programs that target particular groups and often offer religious services in the native language of the group involved.

It is extremely important that libraries trying to target minority groups using English as a second language have basic materials, like library card applications, translated into the language of the targeted group. Publicity posters and brochures should be translated and artwork should feature people from those ethnic backgrounds and/or use authentic artwork and design reflecting the targeted cultures.

Hmong associations are a place to look for someone to translate materials into Hmong, Laotian, or Khmer. A local high school Spanish teacher might be willing to translate materials into Spanish as a service to the library. Other places to look for a translator are area technical colleges with ESL courses or the publishers of native language newspapers for the targeted communities.

Word of mouth is one of the most effective ways to reach non-English speaking parents. The agencies mentioned previously can tell their clients about library services or special events for these families and distribute publicity materials. Ethnic grocery stores and restaurants are good places to put publicity materials because they often act as informal informational centers for the local community. Laundromats in neighborhoods Hispanic families live should also be considered. If particular local businesses employ a large number of Hispanic adults, they may be willing to post fliers in a break room or

include informational brochures with paychecks. Ethnic newspapers and radio and television stations are often anxious to tell community members about public services especially designed to meet their needs.

Targeting Parents in Jails and Prisons

One of the best ways public libraries can address the needs of parents who are incarcerated is to work with their local literacy providers. They may have literacy services within the institution, working directly with the educational coordinators within the correctional facility, or with correctional staff who are involved with supervision after release.

Several prisons and county jails in Wisconsin have programs that involve parents in learning to read and then using those skills to make an audio or video tape of the inmate reading a child's book. The tape and book are mailed to the inmate's child. This program encourages emerging literacy skills of the parent. It also makes an important connection between parent and child, and the child and books and reading. Institutions that already offer the program may welcome the assistance and involvement of public libraries. Some libraries and regional systems have used Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding to initiate these types of services. Librarians should be prepared to cooperate with security procedures in any correctional facility.

Security involved for families visiting relatives in prison can be intimidating or traumatic for adults and even more so for young children. Several LSTA projects have involved placing children's books in the prison or jail visitation rooms in cooperation with institution staff. The families typically are not allowed to bring anything into the prison. Once in the visitation room it may be hard for the incarcerated parent to re-connect with their child or help them relax. Books may be very familiar to children and reading may help bring a sense of normalcy to a stressful situation. For parents who never read to their children prior to incarceration, the availability of books may encourage them to begin reading together. Often children become bored as their parents talk and having books available gives the children something to do while they are visiting. On visitation days some public librarians offer story programs within the correction facilities for inmates and their families.

The following groups and individuals may be able to help public libraries connect with parents who are inmates and who have young children:

- Jail or prison education supervisors or prison librarians
- Jail administrators, often the local county sheriff
- Local literacy providers that operate programs within correctional institutions
- Jail or prison social workers or chaplains
- Jail instructors for the teens who are held in a county jail, group home or other detention facility
- State coordinators of institutions for juveniles, or the institution's social workers or teachers

Targeting Families Living in Poverty with Young Children

A high percentage of all parent groups mentioned live in poverty. Families struggling every day to survive economically often are not library users. Many children living in poverty have only one parent involved in their lives. In two-parent families, the parents may both be working more than one job and are likely to have transportation problems. They may live in neighborhoods that are not safe. The parents may not be available to take the children to the library and the children cannot safely walk to and from the library alone. Often public library branches are not located in neighborhoods with a high density of disadvantaged populations. Outside demands may not leave much time for these parents to make use of a free public service like a library. They may not have finished high school and may not perceive reading as important in their lives or the lives of their children. For these reasons, public librarians may have more success reaching these parents if they partner with an agency that already serves the families.

This recommendation that libraries need to network and collaborate with other agencies to reach parents living in poverty was supported by a recent PLA/ALSC study. (Some of the findings of the study are included in Appendix 3.) Participating librarians agreed that the most effective promotional channels for reaching parents who have low levels of education or low incomes were personal contact (face-to-face and on the phone) and third party endorsement through parents or via partner agencies. The study also concluded that sessions held where the target audience was located, usually outside the library, were more successful than holding them at the library. Interviews with parents confirmed that many were not

library users. They would not have been aware of the programs if they were advertised in the library. Although the study did not ask parents about their comfort level with public libraries, it is likely they may not have been comfortable coming to a public library to begin the programs and may not have taken advantage of them had they been held at the library.

The study demonstrated a clear and powerful result of library-sponsored training for parents living in poverty who have young children. Results indicate that these parents made impressive gains during the project. As a result of the training, the percentage of parents living in poverty who shared books with their babies and young children increased. The percentage of these parents who began to visit a public library at least once a month increased by almost forty percent! Parents in this group who had babies under two years of age increased the amount of time they spent talking to their babies about what was happening around them. Parents with four-and-five-year-olds began to spend more time helping their children learn new words.

African American children make up the largest group of children living in poverty in Wisconsin. In fact, Wisconsin has the second highest percentage rate of African American children living in poverty in the country. The PLA/ALSC study broke down the impact library training had for African American parents and parents from other non-white groups. African American parents and other-race parents used several literacy behaviors less frequently than white parents at the beginning of the sessions but made substantial gains after attending. One area of improvement was time spent reading to their children. Parents who began reading to their children daily increased by fifty-four percent. African American parents of two-and-three-year-olds increased the time they spent reading books with their children. African American parents with children in all three age groups increased the number of library visits they made by twenty-five percent. African American parents of four and five year-olds increased the time they spent playing word games with their children by over twenty-two percent. Over twelve percent of African American parents with children under the age of two began to talk to their babies more often throughout the day.

Good partnering agencies with which public libraries can collaborate to reach families living in poverty include school districts or a particular school in a neighborhood with high poverty rates. The following agencies may have parent meetings and welcome presentations by public library staff:

- Head Start and Even Start programs
- Social service agencies that offer services to families living in poverty
- Homeless shelters
- Domestic abuse shelters
- Low income housing agencies or providers
- Day care providers who care for children living in poverty
- Food pantries and soup kitchens
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition and infant health care sites
- Free clinics
- Birth to Three programs
- Agencies that provide services to families where child abuse or neglect has occurred
- Neighborhood community centers
- Literacy providers
- Senior support groups for grandparents raising grandchildren

Targeting Day Care Providers that Serve Children of these Parent Groups

Several public libraries and regional systems have used LSTA funding to provide outreach services to Head Start and Even Start programs and to day care providers who care for children in any of the targeted categories. One highly successful project is the "Books 2 Go" program created by the Milwaukee Public Library. Their most recent efforts include trying to reach day care providers who speak Spanish or who care for children whose first language is Spanish. Several LSTA projects have involved the library sending a van with materials for check out, providing an in-center program for participating centers, or delivering direct services to home day care providers. Many libraries throughout Wisconsin provide special services to day care providers and centers. Some do on-site programs. Others have rotating book

and material collections. Most public libraries welcome day care providers and centers to their regular programs.

Not surprisingly, professionally trained care givers reported high levels of book sharing at the beginning of the PLA/ALSC study. However, it is likely that care givers with lower levels of professional training are likely to benefit most from library training on early learning. Often home day care providers have less professional training than directors and staff in large centers. The study indicated there were a variety of benefits from public library training even for care givers with the highest levels of professional training.

It is extremely important for public libraries to reach providers, especially home day care proviers, who are likely to have less training than staff in a large center. Children may spend more daytime hours with care providers than with their parents. These providers may not understand that bonding and emotional development affect learning. They may not have an understanding of infant brain and language development nor may they know the importance of reading to young children. Care givers with less formal training made significant gains as a result of attending the sessions. Care givers of two-and three-year-olds who had less training increased their book sharing by thirty-three percent. Care givers with less training made substantial gains in terms of spending more time sharing books, introducing letter sounds, playing word games, and helping children build vocabulary.

The PLA/ALSC study provides evidence that public library training has an impact for care givers, even for those with a strong professional educational background. Almost two thirds of the care givers for whom educational levels were recorded had at least some college training. Almost a fourth of them had a college degree. That may explain why care givers did not demonstrate the same level of gains as parents. However, their comments indicated they gained a better understanding of the critical importance of early literacy development. They appreciated the librarians' modeling of exciting ways to share books, book lists, books to browse through at the early literacy sessions, and free books given them as part of the project.

One result of the sessions was that care givers significantly increased their public library usage. Care givers of children under the age of two increased their library usage by over fifteen percent. Some day care providers reported making regular visits to the library for materials but did not take the children with them. Some of them indicated they would now schedule their library visits at times when the children could come along. Others explained difficulties involved in bringing children to the library with them.

Some of the care givers were pleased that the library reinforced the messages they had already given parents. They urged the libraries to continue to share information with parents and provide book lists and activities for them to pass along to parents. They reported book sharing was more enjoyable for their children and themselves when they used the methods of sharing books suggested in the sessions. Care givers of children under the age of three said the sessions gave them new ways to think about using books with babies and new strategies to use with children in their care. Care givers particularly appreciated learning about research on early literacy development and shared the information from the session with others.

Care givers wanted more: "More information. More training. More programs. More time to talk and interactore information about Dialogic Reading." Many asked for information on puppets, flannel boards, additional ways to share books, and techniques to help develop early literacy skills.

Care givers indicated a need for library programs and book lists in Spanish. They encouraged public libraries to offer bi-lingual story programs or have interpreters available during the programs. They indicated an interest in programs and materials that addressed multicultural issues. They also said that activities for children should be in both English and Spanish so parents and staff could both read it. Care givers indicated parents and other care givers would benefit from public library programs in which librarians demonstrated techniques and activities while participants worked with infants and preschool children.

Continuing Education Resources for Day Care Providers

Licensed day care providers in Wisconsin are required to have a specific number of training hours each year. Many providers get this education through regional meetings of the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA). Public librarians are likely to be welcomed to these sessions and can use the opportunity to talk about the importance of reading to very young children, share some techniques, and give book talks on new books for infants and toddlers or preschoolers.

If regional library systems want to invite day care providers to training sessions, it is important to arrange in advance for continuing education unit credits (C.E.U.). The Registry, which receives funding in part from the Department of Workforce Development, approves training programs for C.E.U. credit for Wisconsin day care providers. Bar codes for each session are required. The bar code labels can be downloaded from the webpage once the program has been approved for credit. The Registry is located at 251 Seiferth Road, Madison, WI 53716. To contact The Registry call 608-222-1123; send email to: registry@the_registry.org or go to the web site at www.wisconsintrainingnetwork.info

The Child Care Information Center (CCIC) offers many types of assistance to public libraries. The CCIC is located at the Wisconsin Reference and Loan Library at 2109 S. Stoughton Road, Madison, WI 53716. The CCIC, like The Registry, is funded through the Department of Workforce Development. The center offers information on numerous topics related to early childhood. Many of the brochures are free or can be copied by public libraries. The CCIC has an excellent monthly newsletter that goes to many day care providers but it is also appropriate and useful to public librarians. The CCIC can help libraries contact their local day care organizations that provide training opportunities. Contact them by email at: haddali@dwd.state.wi.us or call 608-224-5388 or 800-362-7353.

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA) is another potential resource for public libraries. Many day care providers and early childhood specialists are members of WECA. WECA sponsors numerous continuing education programs for early childhood educators and day care providers. The address is 744 Williamson Avenue, Madison, WI 53703. The phone number is 608-240-9880; email: registry@the_registry.org; website: www.wisconsintrainingnetwork.info.

THE IMPORTANCE OF INFANT BONDING AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LEARNING

The regional training sessions done as part of this initiative included information on infant brain development. Most of these sessions were conducted or arranged for DLTCL by the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. The council offers on-going training throughout the state by members of their "Brain Team." Presentations included information on importance of bonding and background on the affects of infant neglect and abuse. The council offers many free resources on these topics.

Responding to the Cry of a Baby

Infants need a stable, loving environment in which their needs are met by adults. Studies have shown that babies, even those with good nutrition, will die if they are not touched. Premature babies, who are massaged and stroked, gain weight faster than infants who receive the same amount of nutrition but are handled as little as possible. Studies show touch helps the babies digest more of the nutrients in their food. Loving caresses and consistent loving responses to a baby when she cries are necessary for normal development of the infant's brain. A baby learns to bond with human beings primarily because of an appropriate response to his cry.

In the past, parents of newborn babies were sometimes warned not to pick up the baby or not to respond every time he cried because doing so might "spoil" the baby. It might lead the baby to intentionally cry for attention, when none was needed. Current infant development theory holds that an infant is incapable of plotting or intellectual active thinking, because the neural pathways in the brain are not yet connected. The baby does not have the ability to cry with an intent to manipulate adults. A baby cries because the baby has a need. It is critical to normal emotional development that a responsible adult consistently respond and try to help a baby when she cries. This is the beginning of the development of human trust, love, and a positive self concept.

Recent studies of infant brains shed light on one cause of infant crying. They indicate that the parts of the brain that regulate sleep and release serotonin, a chemical that helps facilitate sleep, are not well developed at birth. As a result, newborns often do not have regular sleep patterns. They may sleep for only a brief time and then wake up although they are not hungry or uncomfortable. They may need help from an adult to get them back to sleep again.

Repeated experiences become encoded in the brain as memory. Expectations about the world develop from these memories over time and become a model for what the child expects from the people around him. The response or lack of response of adults to the baby, shapes the child's perceptions and expectations of the world around her. The most critical period for normal emotional development is from birth to eighteen months. Neglect and abuse during this time can cause severe damage to the child's emotional development and even death. Depending on the severity and length of time involved, there may be little that can be done to help the child later to overcome trauma that occurs during this critical time.

When a crying baby is comforted by a parent or care giver, hormones such as dopamine flood the brain and help the child become calm and relaxed. Rocking, stroking, and cuddling a child release calming hormones in the brains of both the child and the adult. This mutually pleasant sense of well-being is one biological reason that a bond develops between child and parent and the child and care giver.

Young babies especially need a prompt, predictable response to their cry. It is critical that babies be cared for in an environment that is safe and in which they are consistently nurtured. Appropriate care results in babies feeling safe. It fosters both a sense of control over the world around them and a sense of worth. Secure attachment and bonding are the result of emotionally sensitive responses to the baby's signals. Strong infant bonding amplifies the baby's positive emotional development and moderates negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, and sadness.

One study on the impact of parental bonding involved immunizations. When babies are given an shot, they cry loud and long regardless of whether they are placed on an examination table or held by a parent. However, blood pressure of the babies held in the arms of their parent did not go up as high and came down much faster than that of babies who were placed on the table.

Babies need to be cared for consistently by the same nurturing adults to bond well. Care givers who do not respond to a crying baby or who are inconsistent about their response, can cause a baby to become anxious. The baby may have trouble interpreting the intentions of other people as he gets older.

Abusive care givers who frighten or hurt children may cause them to have attention deficit problems and difficulty regulating their emotions and behavior. The children may be uncooperative, excessively demanding, or compulsively compliant.

Effects of Early Neglect and Abuse and the Damage Caused by the Release of Stress Hormones on the Developing Brain

Research indicates that parts of the brains of children who, as infants and toddlers, have lived in an environment of abuse, neglect, or other severe trauma over a prolonged period of time, are actually out of proportion when compared to the normal brain. The work done by Dr. Bruce Perry, a renowned authority on infant brain development, indicates the brains of children who experience early, long term, severe neglect or abuse are smaller than those of normal children. When a developing brain overuses the parts that respond to emergencies, those parts of the brain actually become larger than they should. Correspondingly, the parts that regulate impulse control and response to stress are not as large as they should be.

Early stress, neglect, and trauma increase the activity of the lower parts of the brain and inhibit the regulatory and modulation activity of the higher areas. Studies indicate brains of infants raised in stressful environments are continually washed by the hormone cortisol. Cortisol is released to help people in "flight or fight" situations. In the infant brain, when too much cortisol is released it acts as an acid. It eats away at the myelin sheath that is beginning to develop around the neural tubes, the structures that "wire" a brain for logical thought. This sheathing functions somewhat like the rubber coating on an electrical cord. Without it, the bio-electrical chemical messages do not get transmitted as they should and the misdirection can cause brain damage, or result in the brain being "wired" inappropriately. Cortisol damages the parts of the brain involved with memory, making learning more difficult.

Educational Costs of Early Neglect and Abuse

High stress environments often associated with poverty or domestic violence can result in children having a negative working model for the world around them. Their behaviors reflect their perceptions. These children often have low self-esteem and are often unable to form close relationships. They may demonstrate controlling behaviors. They may be aggressive or antisocial. Or, they may show little emotion and not have many friends. They may become overly compliant, distracted, or seek to constantly entertain other people. They may take on care giver roles, become bullies, or be highly manipulative.

Children raised in stressful environments often react with aggression and anger out of proportion to the situation. The brains of these children are organized for survival. They are in a constant state of high alert. The limbic and cortical areas of the brains of children exposed to trauma in infancy can be twenty to thirty percent smaller than those areas in the brains of normal children. In a classroom, these children may be hyper-aroused and be constantly alert to perceived threats. They may be highly impulsive and find it difficult to concentrate. The parts of the brain that should override and temper their anger and aggression are not strong enough to overcome the signals from the part of the brain that tells them there is a threat. They feel a need to continually strike out at other people around them. Learning is often affected because of difficulty with concentration. They frequently have learning disabilities in addition to emotional and behavior problems.

These children are often placed in special education classes and may need assistance with behavior control and learning through their entire education. Early abuse and neglect exact a very high price for schools and society.

Prison Costs Related to Early Neglect and Abuse

A child who survives severe forms of infant neglect and/or abuse that occurred over a long period of time prior to the age of three, is unlikely to ever really trust, love, and relate normally to other people. Current research indications are that the damage caused by abuse and neglect in the very earliest years of a child's life are likely to last forever.

Studies of the brains of U.S. prison inmates who committed the most violent of crimes indicate that the affective parts of the brains of these inmates resembled those of people who have Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's is known to destroy the affective sections of the brain. Scans of the brains of patients with Alzheimer's look as though there are holes in these regions. This same "Swiss cheese" look in the affective areas appeared in the brains of the inmates in the study although they did not have Alzheimer's.

These inmates all had records of involvement by a social service agency for early neglect or abuse. The study seems to indicate that if human beings do not bond as infants, they are never really able to interact with other people in normal ways. They have limited ability to love or trust and have little empathy or feeling for people they hurt or kill. Early abuse and neglect may be related to psychopathic behavior when these children become adults. Again there are significant costs to society in terms of crime, jails, prisons, therapy and medication needed to treat these people as adults.

Return on Investment in Early Childhood

Studies that demonstrate cost savings resulting from investment early in children's lives indicate more money should be spent on early childhood nutrition, health care, parenting support, day care, Head Start, and other early childhood programs. The result would be fewer students assigned to special education classes, more students reading at grade level, and higher graduation rates. Since school failure has a close correlation with incarceration, it would also seem investment in early childhood would result in lowering society's costs for prisons and court systems.

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LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENT LITERACY

Part of the segment on infant brain development presented at the regional training sessions done for this initiative focused on language development. Most presenters had participated in training offered by the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families. The following information is summarized from various presentations and additional resources listed at the end of the section.

Language Comprehension Begins Before Birth

Language development is the precursor to literacy. It begins even before a baby is born. Studies show a baby who is just a few days old will make an effort to move his head toward the sound of his mother's voice because the baby already recognizes her voice. Vision is not well developed at birth so babies cannot focus their eyes for several weeks, but their hearing is similar to that of adults. Babies initially learn much about the world around them through how they are touched and what they taste, hear, and smell. Later they learn by mouthing objects.

Newborn babies do not understand what people say to them, but as they experience language and other sounds neural connections are made. These connections involve a bio-electrical signal being sent from one neuron to the next in the baby's brain. When the signal jumps from one neuron to another, a connection is made. Millions of connections are made for the newborn. Only connections that are repeated again and again become permanent. Repetition "hard wires" an infant's brain with connections the child will use to learn new things.

Language Development and School Success

Young children need to be exposed to a language-rich environment if they are to start school ready for success. Children who enter school at four or five and have not had the advantages of being read to often, talking frequently with adults, being encouraged to ask questions and having them answered, and having songs and nursery rhymes sung and repeated for them are at a distinct disadvantage. By age two children in language-rich homes speak 300 more words than children raised by parents who don't talk very much to their babies. It is estimated that children who come from a rich language environment that often exists in the homes of professional parents hear 215,000 words per week. A child in a working class family may hear 125,000 words per week while a child raised on welfare may only hear 62,000 words per week.

At best, schools can only keep these children from falling farther behind other children, but they cannot make up for the deficit. As the child makes progress so do the other children, thus the learning gap really never closes. Reading is so closely tied to language that children who enter school with weak language skills often have trouble learning to read.

Language experience, or lack of it, is tied closely to early school success or failure, particularly in learning to read. Children who have a strong vocabulary recognize the meaning of words in a sentence and can use that understanding to help them interpret the complete sentence. Children who know how to rhyme and can give an example of a word that starts with a specific phonemic sound have a distinct advantage over children who do not have this experience. In fact, some studies have indicated that the ability to rhyme when children enter kindergarten is an excellent predictor of their future success in reading. Children who come to school without an understanding of rhyming often have difficulty learning to read. The lack of rhyming skills and general phonemic awareness is often an indication of a language deficit.

Other important skills are phonological awareness, print awareness, and skill with oral language. Phonological awareness is required for decoding print. Children must understand that individual sounds in words are represented by letters. Phonological awareness is a strong predictor of early reading achievement. The ability to rhyme is one of the earliest indications of phonological awareness. Another indicator is the ability to give a word that starts like another word (alliteration) or give a word sounds the same in the middle as another.

Print awareness requires children to have hours and hours of experience holding and looking at books, turning pages, trying to "read" books, as well as many hours of having books read one-on-one to them. Indications of print awareness include knowing that the print gives the words for the story, moving

through a book from front to back, looking at pages from left to right and top to bottom, knowing the words for a story continue on the next page, and being able to turn pages with two fingers at the corner of the page. Print awareness is evident when children recognize letters, especially if they also know letter sounds.

Oral language skills are associated with reading comprehension. Many poor readers have weak oral language skills. By age two differences in the use of grammar can be seen between children who have weak oral language skills and those who have good skills. By age four there can be significant differences in expressive vocabulary. Children who exhibit language weaknesses when they enter school often develop substantial reading problems by second grade.

Public libraries are in an excellent position to help parents of infants understand how important it is to talk, recite nursery rhymes, read to their babies, and continue to read to their children through the preschool years and beyond.

How Babies Learn Language

It is never too early to read to a baby. A newborn baby does not understand the words read and will not be able to see the pages in the book. Reading may be one way parents will feel comfortable interacting with their baby. Singing, reciting nursery rhymes, talking about what the parent is doing as he goes about daily activities are all important. Brain connections are being made continually. The language the baby hears makes distinct neural connections in the brain long before the baby can actually talk.

Language is learned one sound and one word at a time. It is learned through interaction with adults. As a baby begins to make vocal sounds, the care giver or parent often repeats them and smiles or opens his eyes wide with expression. The baby studies the faces of his parents and tries to imitate the expressions and movement she sees. Babies are very interested when an adult repeats a sound they have made. This early exchange of babble helps “hard wire” those sounds for the baby. Sounds that are not repeated by the parent often are dropped and the brain connections for them dissolve.

A baby’s receptive language develops before expressive language. Babies understand many words long before they can speak themselves. For this reason, many parents teach their baby’s hand signs for certain words. This makes a very firm brain connection for the baby between the word and object. Some frustration can be avoided if a baby can indicate what he wants with hand signs.

Gradually the baby makes a random sound like “ma ma” or “da da” while she explores other sounds like “ah ah,” “na na,” and “ba ba.” They notice the reaction they get for the “ma ma” or “da da” and the brain connections related to those sounds are reinforced. The baby begins to repeat the sounds more frequently and the reinforcement continues. Gradually the baby comes to understand that by saying “ma ma” or “da da” a person will smile, come to them, or turn and look at them. This helps the baby understand the concept of naming. They then begin to say “ma ma” or “da da” out of recognition for a particular person or because they want that person’s attention. They also begin to recognize their own name when it is said. Children learn to speak with brain connections reinforced repeatedly. The brain connections for other sounds that are not reinforced through repetition disappear. By eighteen months, a baby learns new words at the rate of one every two hours.

Learning English when another Language is Spoken at Home

Parents and teachers sometimes worry that children will become confused if they speak English in school and another language at home. They may fear that the child will be slow in learning both. Fear about confusing the languages is unfounded, because young children use different areas of the auditory regions of their brains for each language.

Any child learning English as a second language will need to learn English one word at a time just as they learned their first language. They already understand words represent objects and actions but must learn the correct word to substitute. They may also have to learn new sentence structures and grammar rules. This takes time. When a non-English speaking child is adopted by a family that speaks English, the child may make faster progress because she hears the language both at school and at home. Whereas a child who uses English at school and another language at home may not make progress as rapidly.

Children tend to focus on trying to convey meaning in any way possible. They may point to things, use pantomime, or other non-verbal techniques. They may also use a word from one language when they are speaking the other because they don’t know the word in both languages. This is normal for children

learning to speak English and does not signal “confusion” between the two languages. They are simply using the word they know.

Children who speak more than one language and learn in school to read in English, will not be able to read or write in their native language without instruction. Each language, even Latin-based languages, have their own letter sound combinations, grammatical marks, and sometimes even letters not used in English. Students who grow up speaking two languages often assume they will find taking classes in their native language very easy at the middle and high school levels. They are often surprised to find that they cannot read or write their native language and must learn these skills as though a foreign language, even though they speak the language proficiently. Parents who want their children to read and write in their native language must teach them at home or send them to language classes that will offer reading and writing practice in their native language. Instruction can proceed at the same pace and level the child is using in learning to read and write English.

Learning New Languages in Infancy

Human beings are born with the ability to make forty linguistic sounds, but not all languages use all forty sounds. Studies of the brains of infants indicate that by four days newborns can distinguish one language from another. By six months the map of neural connections in the auditory regions of a baby's brain is different depending on the language the baby hears every day. This separation of pathways for language explains one reason why it is easy for a very young child to learn another language than it is for adults. A child can learn several languages at once and keep them separate. Children, who learn languages very early and continue to speak them as adults, will speak all the languages without an accent.

Adults use the same language processing areas of their brains to learn a new language as they use for their first language. They try to learn the second language within their first language structure. This is one reason it is harder for adults to learn a second language than it is for children. If an adult has not heard certain linguistic sounds from birth, it is often not possible for him to reproduce them correctly when he learns the language. That explains, in part, why adults typically speak their second language with an accent all their lives.

Some parents play language tapes for their infants with an expectation that the child will become fluent in that language. As explained previously, language is acquired through social interaction, not from just hearing language. An infant will not learn a foreign language by listening to a tape. A baby needs to have her efforts at imitating the words and sounds reinforced. There is no interaction involved when a baby listens to a recording without reinforcement. Listening to foreign language tapes may do no real harm, but the baby will not learn the language. Some parents put their babies in front of a television and play videos intended to teach foreign languages. This is not an effective way to teach a baby a foreign language. A recent study warned that most television programs provide so much visual simulation that it overwhelms babies. The study advised that babies should not be placed where they can see a television screen. The researchers expressed concern that exposure to television's visual images at a young age can cause the brain to become “mis-wired” resulting later in hyperactive behaviors and short attention spans.

Some parents hire a care giver who speaks a language other than English and ask the care giver to speak to the child in their native language. Some parents and grandparents speak a language other than English when they speak to the child. Depending on how much contact the child has with the person who speaks another language, the child may learn to speak the second language fluently. The care giver, parent, or grandparent reinforces the words and sounds the baby tries to imitate, and the child learns to use both English and the other language.

However, any brain connections that are made in infancy and early childhood dissolve if they are not used and reinforced. So even if children do learn to speak a second language when they are very young, they will forget most of it once they no longer speak it. If they do retain memory of the second language and do not try to use it until they are adults, they will not be fluent. They would have a preschooler's vocabulary, not an adult's. They also would not have learned to read and write in the language, which is the way adults acquire more sophisticated vocabularies, grammar, sentence structure, and the understanding of idioms.

They will need to re-learn the language as an adult and it is unlikely to be any easier for them than for others who never spoke the second language. However, they may retain some core understanding of linguistic sound elements. This may make it easier for them to hear and reproduce these elements than if

they had never spoken the language. For that reason, they may have less of an accent than others learning the language for the first time as adults.

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PUBLIC LIBRARY PRACTICES THAT FOSTER EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND READING READINESS SKILLS

Elaine Czarnecki and Gilda Martinez of Johns Hopkins University made numerous suggestions at the leadership conference on how public libraries can help foster reading readiness skills during story programs. Some of their suggestions have been combined here with other research to give librarians ideas on how they might modify what they are doing in their programs to build in more language readiness activities.

Young children learn by observing and imitating adults. It is important that even babies and young children are treated as valued patrons in public libraries. In the *Wisconsin Public Library Youth Services Guidelines*, Kathy Beson, now with the Menasha Public Library, told Wisconsin librarians at the start of the planning process:

“I submit to you that it is possible to design and dream a better world....Why should we dream? Why should we make our dream a reality? Because our children deserve the very best dream we can dream for them. Because every book, every checkout point, every contact, every reference question, every program, every smile we give a child COUNTS. Everything we do counts.”

Every contact with a young child in the library does matter. The responsibility to smile and greet infants and young children is a shared responsibility involving every person on staff, from custodians to directors. All staff members can benefit from training that shares information from many disciplines on the unique characteristics of infants and toddlers, their developmental needs, and early brain development theory. Everyone on staff needs training that helps them perceive the very youngest children as valuable and valid library users. Staff members demonstrate respect and courtesy for these young patrons by greeting them and responding to their efforts at verbal and non-verbal communication. This includes smiling back at a baby and waving “bye-bye” to a toddler.

Encourage Active Involvement when Reading a Story

Children learn best when they are actively involved. Public librarians can encourage involvement by children during story times in several ways:

- Ask questions about the story as it is read to encourage a dialog with the children.
- Ask prediction questions—what do they think is going to happen next in the story.
- Ask how the character feels by pointing out elements in the illustrations.

Use techniques that allow all the children to respond to questions but avoid having each child make an individual comment, which can slow the process too much. Ask children to make “dog ears” with their hands if they have a dog at home for a program on dogs, or pretend to lick their paws if they have a cat for a cat story. Then invite children who do not have a dog to pant and children who don’t have cats to meow. This allows all the children to actively participate.

- Sing a song or use a fingerplay that relates to a story.
- Tell or read the story in one way and then retell it again, perhaps using a flannel board.
- Allow the children to act out a story that has been told and provide props for them, perhaps hats, or masks or puppets.
- Use stories that have a refrain, such as *The Three Little Pigs* and *The Gingerbread Boy* and encourage the children to say the refrain with you.
- Use circular stories or songs where the action is described repeatedly and a new element is added each time, such as *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* or *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*.

The Importance of Repetition

Repetition is extremely important to early learning because it “hard wires” brain connections. When children hear a story or song more than once, their brains recognize it. Repeated experiences help make the memory a permanent part of their brain networking. Repetition helps children learn a sense of time and sequence. It helps them learn to predict what is going to happen next. This can be extremely important for children who find transitions difficult, especially if they are autistic.

Children often want the same story read over and over. While this repetition can be very trying for adults, it is important parents and care givers understand that repetition is critical to children’s learning. At first they simply find joy in recognizing a familiar story. After repeated readings they begin to anticipate what is going to happen and are satisfied that each time the story turns out the same way. Knowing what is going to happen helps children develop a sense of security. It helps them make sense out of the world and they come to depend on some things always remaining constant. They learn the important skills of sequence and prediction through repetition. Gradually they are aware if a parent skips a page, and eventually they notice if a parent skips even a word. These observations are all important learning skills and are developed only through repetition. This understanding may help parents, care givers, and librarians appreciate the value in continually reading the same story, singing a favorite song over again and again, and repeating fingerplays.

Encourage Parents to Use Repetition in Daily Routines At Home

Public librarians can help parents and care givers understand the importance of using routines for daily activities. Librarians can point out the numerous opportunities to build routines into daily activities. Routines often help make a child more cooperative because they learn if they cooperate with something they don’t want to do, they will move on more quickly to an activity they do like.

Parents and care givers can include music, songs, or nursery rhymes in daily routines:

- Bath time
- Changing diapers
- Meals
- Clean up time in a day care setting
- Bedtime
- Dressing
- Buckling up a car seat

Suggestions parents and care givers may find helpful at bedtime:

- Try to use the same routine every night and teach babysitters and grandparents, who care for the child occasionally, the routines.
- Bedtime routines may include a musical mobile or music box.
- Many infants and young children enjoy taking the same blanket, stuffed animal, or other “lovey” to bed with them. The object often becomes a source of comfort for the child, makes her feel secure, and helps her relax so that she can fall asleep more easily. Pain over a lost lovey or one left behind can be avoided if the parent purchases several of the same item and the baby learns to accept a rotation of them.

When it is time for a child to give up a lovey, some parents find that they can gradually “trim” the object to make it smaller and smaller, make several small pieces from one large item, or use the original item to make something new. Some “blankies” become part of a quilt that stays on the bed as the child matures.

- Young children cannot eat very much at one time and may be hungry by bedtime so a healthy snack right before bed and brushing teeth can be a good routine.
- A warm bath may help make a child relaxed and sleepy.
- Reading is a good activity to make part of the bedtime routine. It can help the child relax.

Use Repetition in Programs

In a public library environment, especially in programs, there are many ways to build in repetition.

- Start and end the programs in a similar way each time.
- Repeat favorite songs, nursery rhymes, stories, and fingerplays.
- Repeat interesting words as a story is read.
- Repeat a page in a story the children seem to especially like--a silly rhyme or illustration.
- Use stories that have a refrain and encourage the children to say it too.

Use Program Structure to Model Sequencing

Librarians can design their programs so that they model story sequence. Children will come to anticipate what comes next and develop a sense of time during a program that follows a predictable sequence. Librarians can help model sequencing by:

- Placing the stories to be read for the day in a line, left to right. Pick up each one in turn as the program progresses. Or put out symbols like a book, picture of fingers for a fingerplay, and musical instruments for a song, and point them out as the program progresses.
- Tell the children what is going to happen in the program. "First we'll do our welcome song. Then I'll read this book. Then we'll stretch. I'll read this story and we will sing a song. At the end we'll say our good-bye poem and then you will go home."

Build in Ways for Children to Repeat Stories after a Program

There is a saying in the early childhood community that "Play is the work of the child." It is through play that children absorb order and make sense of their experiences. Play is an essential part of the learning process for young children. Children learn by repeating what they see adults do and say. Reading an interesting story makes brain connections for a child. Repetition "hard wires" experiences in the child's brain. Children internalize their experiences by "playing out" what they have observed. This is their way of repeating their experiences for themselves. Librarians can help encourage children to "re-play" a story and the information they present in a program in different ways.

- Leave out the books used in the program so children can take them home and enjoy them again with a parent or care giver.
- Leave out other books for check out, both fiction and non-fiction, related to the theme or other books about the same character, or by the same author.
- Leave out some of the props used in the program so children can repeat the story for themselves, especially if not all children had a chance to use them during the program.
- Leave the program area open, if possible, after a session to allow the children and parents or care givers to repeat stories.
- Send home things that will encourage the child and parent or care giver to repeat elements of the program such as:
 - A simple prop from a story like a piece of string that was used to create a circle on the floor.
 - An author/title list of books read during the program.
 - Words to fingerplays and songs used for that program.
 - A craft project done during the session.
 - Directions for a craft that the parents or care giver can do with the child at home.
- Give the children time to draw a picture about one of the stories or characters at the end of a program or "write" about one of the stories.

Share the Flow and Phonemic Elements of Language in Programs

Children need to understand the flow of language. They need to internalize the cadence, pace, and pitch of language. They have to learn the basic phonemic elements of language such as initial and ending sounds. Young children internalize these linguistic elements when they are exposed to a rich language environment that includes new vocabulary. Oral repetition helps build auditory memory. Young children should be encouraged to recite familiar passages such as nursery rhymes.

Children need to internalize these elements of spoken language long before they begin to interpret written language. Incorporating the following elements into library programming helps young children gain understanding of basic linguistic elements of language:

- Use nursery rhymes, and encourage recitation to build auditory memory.
- Sing songs and use books that include illustrations for familiar songs.
- Encourage children to move to music to develop a sense of rhythm and beat.
- Use poems and fingerplays that rhyme.
- Read books that include alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyming.
- Point out to children that their name starts the same way or has the same beginning sound as a character or a word or as other children in the program.
- Exaggerate the beginning sound of words, for example, **s-s-s-nake**.
- Exaggerate the ending sound of words such as **tick, tock**.
- Encourage children to guess words that rhyme in the story or with a given word.
- Repeat interesting words in text; for example, “**shimmer**.”
- Read stories that have a refrain and encourage the children to repeat it.
- Read “circular” or cumulative stories that repeat each part of the story and add a new verse each time.
- Use books, songs, and poems with a strong beat and encourage the children to clap, tap, and dance or move in time with the beat.

Include Multicultural Materials in Programs

It is often harder to find books for infants and toddlers that reflect a rich diversity of culture and ethnic backgrounds than finding these materials for older preschoolers. Librarians should make a special effort to use culturally and ethnically diverse resources in their programs for all ages beginning with their programs for babies.

Information on the Final Steps in the Reading Process

Just as children learn to walk and talk at different ages, there is a certain range within which children learn to read. The typical range when children begin to read is between ages five to eight years or approximately between kindergarten and second grade. Some children read as early as two or three, but this is unusual. Educators are concerned when children are struggling with beginning reading skills at the end of first grade and through second grade. While a range is typical, children who learn to read fairly easily usually come from an environment with many hours of book sharing with an adult. They are likely to have had rich early experiences with language.

Children who learn to read at a young age are likely to be life-long readers. By second or third grade even if these children start school reading or reading better than other children in their class it is very likely that many other children will be able to read as well or better than the child who started earlier. Reading before school starts is not necessarily an indication of gifted intelligence. Likewise, learning to read toward the end of first grade or in second grade is not necessarily an indication of intelligence, a developmental delay, or that the child has a learning disability. However, teachers become concerned if there is not consistent progress or if there seems to be a delay for the child in terms of grasping beginning reading concepts.

Some types of developmental delays and learning disabilities can be identified very early. There are learning techniques that may help children who have delays in learning to read. Some children start

school far behind others because they have not had the experience with language and books other children had at home. They start school with a distinct disadvantage because they do not have the basic “readiness” skills other children bring with them. Often when this happens, the most schools can do is prevent the child from falling even further behind. Schools cannot help these children “catch up” because the other children continue to learn new things that keep that distance between their achievement levels and that of children who come to school without readiness skills.

Appendix 2 includes background information for librarians on how to identify the best designed “easy readers,” which often have controlled vocabulary for reading specific levels or grades. Many trade books that are not intentionally written for beginning readers, make excellent starting books for children just learning to read. New readers need many skills including picture reading to become fluid. For that reason, wordless books are often appropriate for children just learning to read. The design that helps the eyes follow to the end of a line for the complete thought and allows rest between words, at the end of the line and between the lines, is the same design that is helpful for many children who have learning disabilities.

Appendix 2 includes the information needed to understand the last stage before a child becomes an independent reader. It is the natural outcome of a process that begins at birth with a child building all the experiences she has had and using her emotional framework to tackle the reading challenge with confidence.

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PUBLIC LIBRARY PRACTICES THAT FOSTER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING, WRITING, AND PLAY

Recent research studies in education and reading theory indicate that reading and writing develop at the same time. This research suggests that young children not only need exposure to listening to and exploring books as a precursor to reading, but they also need to experiment with writing tools and to observe adults writing.

Young children may need to spend as much time practicing pre-writing skills as they do with pre-reading activities. For infants the “writing” process involves activities such as smearing mashed potatoes or Jell-O on a high chair tray. It involves time and encouragement to explore a variety of sizes, shapes and textures with their hands and mouth. Any activity that fosters eye-hand coordination is a good precursor to writing.

Baby board books help infants learn how to manipulate books. Inexperienced preschoolers often hold books upside down. They tend to turn pages by pushing in the center with the palm of their hand rather than turning them at the corners. They may also start at random anywhere in the book, turn several pages at one time and go both backward and forward in the book. They need to learn to go sequentially from front to back, turning one page at a time. These same skills are needed to change from a preschooler’s “fist grasp” to positioning the fingers correctly to hold a pencil when writing. Underlying all the activities that help promote emergent reading and writing is the need to understand that play is the way young children learn.

Encourage Pre-Writing Activities in the Home and at Day Care

There are many good activities that promote pre-writing skills. While some of these activities involve holding tools and may have to wait until a baby stops putting things in his mouth, others can be used with even young babies. All of them should be fun for the child and have many benefits in addition to promoting small muscle development. Librarians can encourage parents and day care providers to set up play areas that incorporate these great learning activities, and use some of them in their own programs.

Eye-Hand Coordination Activities

Coordination of a child’s hands and eyes is required for both reading and writing. There are many activities that encourage coordination including playing with blocks and water. The next sections deal with many benefits of water and block play. Following are some additional activities that encourage finger, hand control, and eye-hand coordination at home or care center. These activities are organized for infants and toddlers, progressing to more sophisticated activities for older preschoolers.

- Reaching for objects like a mobile or a toy held by an adult.
- Grasping, squeezing, and mouthing objects, and later playing with them in other ways.
- Eating finger foods and later using a spoon, fork, knife, and toothbrush.
- Holding a bottle or tippy cup while drinking, and later drinking out of a regular cup or glass.
- Smoothing and spreading things, at first messing food on a table or high chair tray, and later working with finger paint, smoothing and patting mud pies in a sand box, or using finger-paint.
- Moving things from one container to another by hand, and later with salad tongs or other tool.
- Taking objects out of a container such as emptying a drawer of plastic containers, taking clean laundry out of a laundry basket, or toys out of a toy box (putting things back comes much later).
- Simple puzzles, first with knobs and only a few pieces, and later more pieces without the knobs.
- Fitting objects into a slot or hole, at first round objects into a large round opening, and later different shapes into smaller and different-sized holes.
- Opening the lids on boxes to take something out or put something inside.
- Putting objects into or taking them out of a beach bag type purse, diaper bag, or large pocket.
- Exploring knobs, buttons on a busy box, lock boxes that push in, slide from side to side, toggle, or turn in a circle.

- Patting, slapping, and shaping play dough and clay.
- Scribbling with chunky-sized chalk, crayons, and markers on large blank pieces of paper or using chalk on the sidewalk (coloring books are not as effective in teaching small muscle control as drawing and writing on blank paper).
- “Painting” with a wide brush and water on a sidewalk or with paint on an easel.
- Taking off shoes and socks, and later putting them back on, as well as getting dressed in other clothes; buttoning and unbuttoning buttons, using snaps and Velcro; and finally tying shoes and undressing and dressing large dolls.

As children get older they will begin to draw shapes and then objects, although at first they may not be easy to recognize. Children who observe adults writing will imitate writing by scribbling a line. Later they will scribble, add a space, and scribble again. This indicates they have noticed that there are spaces between written words. They do not yet recognize individual letters. The final stage of early writing involves children trying to write actual letters, copy their own name in print, then the names of other people important to them, and then other words.

Once children can use a writing or drawing tool with ease, they can learn the coordination needed to “open the mouth” of a scissors and “take a bite” out of paper. It helps some children to open and close their mouths as they open and close the scissors blades to internalize the rhythm of scissors cutting. Fringing paper is one of the easiest scissor skills. It helps if an adult holds the paper and moves it for the child.

Water Play

Water play involves filling containers, squeezing sponges, pouring water through funnels, sieves, and watering cans, experimenting with floating and sinking objects, and measuring volume. Children can play in a pan of water, the sink, in a bathtub or wading pool, at the beach, in a swimming pool, or even a puddle.

Water play has very helpful properties aside from the learning opportunities it offers. Water play often has a calming effect on children who are very active and excitable. It helps slow them down and relax, which helps them focus and promotes a longer attention span. Water often has the same effect on a baby or young child who is over-tired or fussy. A warm, relaxing bath is very soothing and can help calm children who are upset at any time during the day.

Water play seems to have a stimulating effect on very passive, shy children. When children play with water, they can make a change in the surface of the water simply by touching it. They force water from a sponge or washcloth with the slightest amount of pressure. It takes very little effort to interact with water which gives the child a sense of control and mastery.

The addition of a water animal toy such as a shark or alligator can help the child develop a sense of power. As they move the shark or alligator under the water, or use it for “attacks,” they often imagine themselves as this powerful animal that can protect itself and others from harm. The self confidence a child develops through play may encourage him to be more assertive in real life. Children who are aggressive may find a healthy outlet for their emotions by playing with the same type of animal toys. They can use the shark or alligator for “attacks” on each other or other toys. Often, after playing with water and working off a degree of aggression, an excitable child may find it easier to play calmly with other children.

Block Play

Blocks today are made for children from infancy through preschool years. At first infants simply grasp and mouth blocks. But as they mature, they like to watch an adult stack blocks and then love to knock them down. Eventually they enjoy stacking the blocks for themselves and building with them. People, car, and animal toys are often used in conjunction with blocks to encourage imaginary play. One important development milestone for babies is the ability to stack three or more blocks on top of each other.

Blocks give aggressive children a safe outlet. They may spend time building towers with joyful anticipation of pushing or kicking them down. Time spent building and destroying block creations can help an aggressive child behave more appropriately with other children afterward. Shy children experience a sense of power and control when they knock over a tower of blocks and hear the crash.

Playing with blocks teaches young children many mathematical concepts such as comparing lengths, matching sizes, and measurement. Blocks can help young children make and repeat patterns.

Use Pre-Writing Activities, Techniques and Toys in Programs

Pre-Writing Furnishings and Toys for the Library

At the leadership conference Elaine Czarnecki and Gilda Martinez shared ideas that librarians could do to intentionally include more writing during story programs and encourage an interest in the writing process.

The librarian can share with parents and child care providers some ideas for toys that foster small muscle development. Librarians may also want to have some of these toys on hand at the library. Some activities and toys fostering eye-hand coordination, small muscle development, and early writing include:

- Small block sets (foam blocks do not make any noise), and small cars, a train set, and toy animals. All blocks left out in a children's department in a public library setting should be large enough to avoid choking hazards for very young children, since they put most things in their mouths.
- Large beads or block sets that snap together, large Lego®-type sets, bristle-type building blocks. Tables are available for some types of construction sets that help contain and store the pieces.
- Floor rugs with road patterns and toys to use with them.
- Miniature doll house with furniture and dolls and "mouth" style puppets.
- Dressing boards or dolls with buttons, snaps, hooks, laces, etc.
- Sorting boxes for shapes or sizes, knob peg boards and pegs, large wooden beads and laces, or lacing boards.
- Large floor or table top activity boxes with knobs to move through mazes, mirrors, and various buttons and knobs to turn or manipulate.
- Standing or table top magnetic board with manipulative pieces, flannel boards with pieces, chalkboards with chalk, or wipe off boards and non-toxic markers.
- Sturdy models of gears and pulleys and lock boxes with various types of closures.
- Puzzles, some with knobs and some without, make excellent toys at home and at day care settings. However, they can be time-consuming to manage in a library setting. It may help to trace the completed puzzle on the back of each puzzle board as a visual aide in getting multiple puzzles back together quickly.

Ways to Model Writing in Programs

Librarians can incorporate numerous techniques that offer children a chance to observe writing and begin to understand that written words have important meanings. Some simple techniques librarians can add to their programming efforts include:

- Label objects in the room—clock, window, shelf, etc.
- Write a list of titles and activities for the program and consult it, and then point out the next activity on the list for the children.
- As a book is read, occasionally point to words and point a finger below the line of text to draw attention to the fact that the story is actually told by the text. Many young children "picture read" and assume adults do also.
- Use big books and point to words now and then. The large print has an even stronger impact than regular books and draws even more attention to the letters and words.
- Model writing during the program by making a list on a chart of children's suggestions and read it back to them. If a story is about picnics, ask the children what they would take along on a picnic. Write each contribution on a chart. It is not always necessary to write the complete word. It is acceptable to write just the first letter or two and make a squiggle for the rest of the letters. This encourages children to try to write even if they only know the first letter of a word. It also sends a

message to children that scribble writing is a good start at real writing. Give children paper and “chunky” pencils, markers, or crayons to “write” their own list to take home.

- Model writing by stopping occasionally in the middle of a story to write a note. Explain that writing things down helps people remember important things.
- Have magnetic, foam, or flannel letters out in the picture book area or program room for use before, during, or after the program.

Use Name Tags

The use of name tags has many benefits in public library programs. Children like adults to know their names. It is much easier to re-direct a child’s attention if the librarian says the child’s name first. Name tags also offer numerous opportunities for children to practice pre-reading skills. The librarian can point out that the letters on the name tag mean something by pointing to a child’s own name tag and telling him his name. Librarians can encourage the children to find their name tags, or ask the parents to help, but not find it for them. Children usually recognize capital letters before lower case ones, so it might be helpful to write the name tags in all capital letters for children who do not recognize their name. Capital letters are also easier for children to write than lower case. Ask children who already recognize their name to help children who do not. Give them the first letter of the name and ask them to see if they can find it. Write it, if the first child is unsure of how that letter looks. This is an excellent challenge for children who recognize letters and a great model for other children.

Put a sticker with a picture that starts with the same letter sound as the child’s name on the name tags of children who do not recognize their name as a visual clue for them. If a child does not recognize their name, show them only two or three names that each start with a different letter. As that becomes easy, put out two or three that start with different initial letters. Teach this technique to the parents. Encourage children who can write their names, to make their own name tag and praise them for their efforts. It is not unusual for some letters to be backward or for the whole name not to fit on one line. If children cannot write their name but want to try, let them “scribble write” a name tag for themselves or on the one that has their actual name.

Talk About the Parts of the Book

Young children who have been read to for hours and hours before they start school have a distinct advantage over children who have little experience with books. They understand how a book works and how to handle them. They can find the beginning and end, know how to turn one page at a time, and understand the vocabulary in the book. Librarians can help children who do not have a great deal of experience with books by occasionally using the following techniques:

- Name the parts of the book throughout the program.
 - cover
 - pages
 - spine
 - front and back
 - pictures
 - words
 - characters
- Point to and read the author’s name and, if appropriate, tell the children who drew the pictures for the story.
- Pick up a book upside down and explain that to start reading, the book has to be turned the right way. Demonstrate the technique.
- Pick up a book with the back cover showing and demonstrate how to turn it around to start at the beginning.
- Before reading a story, tell the children how it starts.
- As the story is read, mention that it is time to “turn the page” or ask children to turn the pages of a big book as it is read, cuing them when all the text on that page has been read. Explain what happens if two pages are accidentally turned at the same time, or one is skipped.

- Ask “Before I turn the page, what do you think is going to happen?” or “What do you think will happen on the next page?”
- Compare two pages and say, “Let’s go back and look at the other page again.”
- At the end of a book say “The end.” or “That’s the end of the story.” Encourage children to say it with you as you finish each book.
- Ask children how they liked the end of the story.
- Ask children which was their favorite page, and re-read it.
- Mention or point to the page number for the correct page if there was a pause for discussion during the story to indicate that the page number helps keep the place in the book.
- Talk about the need to turn one page at a time and how to take good care of books. Show damaged books to illustrate what happens when people are not careful with books. Talk about not writing in or ripping library books. Avoid assigning blame, just invite children to help take good care of books. Children seem to relate to books damaged by naughty pets.
- Point out books or pages that have a non-traditional format.
 - vertical rather than horizontal layout
 - flaps that lift up or tabs that make objects pop-up
 - books that have more than one story line on the same page
 - characters that are doing or saying secondary things on each page
 - pages that have hidden pictures or puzzles on them
- Draw attention to the illustrations in books, information a reader might get from what is happening in the picture, or in an expression not stated in the text.
- Use both fiction and non-fiction books and explain that non-fiction titles give information and are not stories. Studies indicate that many preschool boys and some girls, when given a choice between stories about cars or bears and books about real cars or bears will choose non-fiction titles. Often librarians use parts of non-fiction books or show just a picture or two.
- Use wordless books and point out that because the book doesn’t have any words the readers have to tell the story by looking at the pictures.
- Use ABC books. Even if the entire book is not read, mention a few letters and the objects on the page.

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PUBLIC LIBRARY PRACTICES THAT FOSTER MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMERGENT MATH LITERACY

Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn report on numerous studies involving infants and mathematical understanding in their book, *Minds Brain-Building Games Your Baby Will Love*. The authors discuss the work of Rachel Gelman at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Gelman did studies with babies as young as five months. A toy figure was put in a viewing box, and then a barrier prevented the baby from seeing the toy. A hand put a second toy behind the barrier. When the barrier was removed, there was only one toy. The facial expressions of the babies indicated that they expected there would be two toys not one, even though the babies had not actually seen the two toys side by side. The babies lifted their eyebrows; their eyes got big and they stared intently at the single toy. This study indicates that a basic understanding of addition and subtraction, or “more” and “less,” or at least an understanding of a change in quantity, develops very early.

Other studies at UCLA indicated that babies between six and nine months look intently at different arrangements of three objects when they are first presented but become bored after awhile. However, the babies became immediately interested again when the arrangements suddenly were switched to only two objects. Follow-up experiments with babies who were only a few days old demonstrated similar interest when the number of objects changed. Babies also become alert to a change in the number of tones and syllables they heard.

Gelman and her co-researchers also discovered that when babies looked at pictures of objects and heard drum beats at the same time, they tended to look at a card of two objects when they heard two drum beats, and at cards with three objects when they heard three drum beats. The results of these studies indicate that even very young babies have at least a basic awareness of quantity.

Research done at the University of California at Berkeley indicates that parents of preschool children in cultures that have traditionally higher math scores than those of students in the U.S., involve their children in more math activities than typical American parents do. These parents sing songs about numbers, play board games that involve numbers, and special relationships such as using dominoes and tangrams. They routinely point out the math involved as they go about their daily lives cooking, washing clothes, and doing other household activities. There is also a significant difference in how much time parents in some cultures spend talking to young children about spatial concepts such as shapes and forms and time concepts. In some cultures these concepts are introduced at a much younger age than in the United States. Parents in the U.S. do not seem to recognize how early young children understand mathematical concepts.

Adults can typically look at a group of up to five or six objects and guess the quantity without actually counting them, but after seven items, they count each one before deciding quantity. The range for babies seems to be up to three items. So it is a good idea when working with babies and math concepts to use no more than three objects.

Encourage Math Activities at Home and at Day Care

Color Concepts

- Newborns prefer to look at distinct patterns, especially black and white. Because their eyes cannot focus well, these patterns are easiest for them to perceive differences. By about six to eight weeks most babies prefer bright, bold colors to black and white or pastel colors. They are very interested in faces.
- Parents can encourage interest in colors by talking to the baby about the color of objects the baby sees, the clothes the baby is wearing, and the color of toys. They can also sing songs about colors.
- Parents might want to play color games with babies by putting out three objects of all the same color and then suddenly changing the color of one of them. The novelty of the change renews the baby's interest in the game.

- Children are usually able to match colors before they can name them by themselves. They may be able to point to something blue on their shirt if shown what the color looks like before they can independently name the color of something the parent points to for the child.
- As the child gets older the parent can encourage her to name colors and give directions related to colors. The parent might tell the child to get her yellow boots, pick out some red socks, or her blue shirt.
- Parents can give children choices based on color. They can ask the child if he wants a red or yellow cup. A choice of two is often best for young children. Once children become aware of colors and color names, they often develop a strong preference for one color or another.
- Color is often used as the first characteristic children use to sort, match, and classify things. Children may be given the task of matching socks of different colors.
- Board games, such as Candy Land®, often are color-based and offer practice in color recognition for older preschoolers.
- Many children recognize and can name and match eight or more colors by the time they start kindergarten.

Numbers and Counting

- Count only to three with babies, or work with up to three objects at a time. This seems to be the best range for babies. As the child matures they can manage up to five objects and gradually work their way up to ten.
- Because babies do notice changes in patterns in relation to quantities, play games that involve several repetitions of a certain quantity and then a switch to a new quantity. A simple example is a gentle bouncing game. Bounce the child three times and stop, repeat five or six times to set a pattern. Then bounce only twice. Set that pattern and then switch it again. Other activities could include shaking a rattle, swinging a baby, or splashing water following certain patterns. The surprise change in quantity keeps the baby interested in the game. As with any baby game, continue only if the baby is happy and interested. Watch the baby's face and body for signs of the baby being tired or not enjoying the game.
- Basic quantities, addition, and subtraction equations can be described to babies. A parent can point out one doggie and say, "Look there was one doggie, and now here comes another doggie. Now there are two doggies! One, two."
- Children often are very interested and try hard to learn something that is just beyond what they can already do. This theory is called the "Zone of Proximal Development." Parents can challenge a child who can count to three to count to five, and once that is easy for the child go on to ten. When a child can correctly count three objects, a few more can be added.
- Many preschool children can verbally count to ten, and some to twenty or one hundred before kindergarten, but they do not always use "one-to-one" correspondence. They may skip objects as they count, or count some objects more than once. They may skip around instead of counting them in a logical organized way. This explains why a child may say there are twelve or fifteen objects when there are only five or six. The child keeps counting verbally without realizing each count must be associated with a single item.
- It helps to teach children to count by picking up each object as a number is said. A rhythm can be built into counting exercises if children are taught to say the number as they drop the object they have picked up into a container. It also helps to arrange objects in straight lines and move consistently from left to right or up and down one line at a time. The parent can help the child touch each object as one number at a time is said.
- The parent or care giver can practice verbal counting throughout the day. Count the steps as the child goes up or down them. Count spoons as the table is set and match each spoon to the bowls on the table. Count cereal pieces at breakfast. Count the sticks of gum left in a package. This helps children understand that the last number is the total quantity of whatever is being counted. This understanding that total quantity is expressed by the last number is called "cardinality" and is an important milestone in early mathematical learning.
- Once a child understands how to count objects, he can begin to learn how to compare quantities and make other comparisons. He can understand concepts such as "more" and "less," "older" and "younger," "shorter" and "taller." The child will also know when two objects are the same; or when

two glasses have the same amount of milk in them; or when two people have the same number of items.

- When children understand not to put money in their mouths, parents can help them count coins. Preschoolers know by watching adults that money is important, and they like to handle it. Young children like to count coins.
- Money is a good way for parents to introduce the concept of “relative value.” Children initially feel all coins have the same value. They count all of them as “one.” They may prefer pennies because they like the color. Children often prefer ten pennies or two nickels instead of a dime because they think they have “more” with pennies or nickels. Parents can explain an object costs ten cents; and the child can purchase the item with ten pennies, two nickels, or one dime. Parents can help the child create sets using coins that have the same value.
- Parents can give children opportunities to practice number recognition by pointing out numerals to them on walks, on street or highway signs, and by telling them what button to push on an elevator.
- Card games, dominoes, and many early board games give young children a chance to practice counting.

Shapes and Spatial Relations

- Babies start to explore shapes and textures by putting things in their mouths. They feel the roundness of a ball and the sides of a cube with both hands and mouth.
- Parents can talk about the shapes of toys and objects in the baby’s world.
- Block play helps preschoolers internalize their understanding of basic shapes like squares, rectangles, and triangles.
- Outdoor play equipment, circle games, and outdoor activities many opportunities for preschool children to experience shapes with their whole body. Climbing a slide, going down, and running back to the ladder forms a triangle. Riding a merry-go-round completes a circle. Walking on a curb is a straight line; a path can be a curved line. A kite or a rainbow can make an arch across the sky.
- Activities that involve large muscles also help a child establish an understanding of their own body space. They learn to duck down when they want to run through a tunnel because they are too tall to go through standing up straight. They learn which big rocks or small trees they can climb and which they can’t, because their arms and legs are too short. They find out what spaces they can crawl into without getting stuck because they are too big.
- Parents can point out the shapes of food. The “o” in breakfast cereal, a pancake, or slice of bologna, and a plate all are a circle shape. Crackers are often squares, rectangles, or triangles. Cheese slices and sandwiches can be cut to form different shapes.
- Babies learn about shape and size by fitting toys into containers. The easiest to start with is fitting a round object into a large round hole. Young babies like to be able to see the object in the container and reach in and take it out again. As the baby matures and finds fitting round objects in round holes easy, one new shape, usually a square and then a triangle, can be added to the game. Older babies may enjoy fitting one large puzzle piece into its place. The piece should have knobs. As the child matures, puzzles with gradually more pieces can be added.
- Preschool children may enjoy stringing different shaped wooden beads onto a string. Similar activities are “sewing” with a large plastic needle on sewing cards or using glue to create items out of fabric or foam pieces.
- Parquetry blocks and Chinese tangrams foster spatial awareness and appreciation.
- Paper folding activities such as wrapping presents, making paper airplanes and fans, simple origami folding, and cutting paper snowflakes from folded paper help a young child visualize how a flat piece of paper relates to the folded version.

Measurement

- Babies often enjoy parents playing a game of “So Big” with them. The parent holds the baby’s hands and says, “How big is baby?” or out to the side and says, “So Big!”

- Parents often track and record the growth of a baby. Once the baby can stand, this can become a ritual in where the height of the child is measured against a growth chart on the wall or marked on a door sill.
- Cooking activities offer many opportunities to talk about measurement, and explore liquid and solid volume and quantities.
- Blocks, water play, and sand play offer opportunities for children to compare linear measurement and quantities, as well as liquid and solid volume.
- Lengths of string, tape measures, yard sticks, and rulers are fun things for a child to use to explore length and width, even if they can't read the numbers. Children often enjoy using their bodies to measure and compare height, especially comparing their height to that of other children.
- Musical experiences help children internalize their understanding of the measurement.

Time

- Establish daily routines, but be aware that a baby's needs often determine the "right time" to do things. Feeding, bathing, playing, and sleeping should be adjusted to meet the baby's needs. As the baby gets older parents determine things like nap time or bedtime.
- Teach awareness of sequential activities. Although young children cannot read the time on a clock, they begin to recognize the sequence of daily routines. It is helpful when parents establish specific routines for certain daily activities like getting up and dressed and bedtime. Young children order their lives by daily sequences. Routines help them know what to expect and give a sense of predictability that helps children feel secure. Some parents use pictures to clue children to the routine events in a day. Routines foster cooperation on the part of the child.
- Explain time intervals. Parents can point out certain times on a clock such as bedtime. They can set an alarm to signal a certain amount of time has passed or that it is time to do something. Parents often use a one- minute egg timer when a preschooler is taking a "time out" or "thinking time" by sitting quietly on a chair as a discipline technique. The general recommendation is only one minute per year of the child's age. The child is able to watch the timer and know when she is free to resume her activities as long as she avoids the behavior that caused the time out.
- Begin calendar awareness. Parents can help children understand the days of the week by mentioning the day for regular activities or the day for a special activity. Parents can help a child develop a sense of time within a month or year by marking off and counting the days until a special event and by talking about things that the child or family did "last year." They can talk about activities that are only done on holidays or once a year. Celebrating birthdays, especially the child's, helps a child gain a sense of the length of a year.
- Use music to teach rhythm and beat. Musical activities help children develop a sense of body timing and rhythm. Preliminary research by Gordon Shaw at the University of California and Frances Rauscher at the University of Wisconsin indicates playing musical instruments, especially a keyboard, facilitates the child's ability to solve spatial problems. Activities such as putting puzzles together, building with blocks, copying geometric shapes, and solving mazes all help develop a sense of spatial awareness. Experience in making music seems to give children an advantage in solving problems related to these activities. Studies with elementary-aged children show keyboard experience influenced students' ability to work with fractions and ratios.

Use Emergent Math Activities in Programs

Public librarians can incorporate many activities into their story programs that foster emergent mathematical skills.

Color Concepts

- Use color in the decor of the children's department and story time room. Point out the colors in the room. Ask children to point to things that are a certain color.

- Use books about color and point out interesting colors in picture books. Ask children to try to find that color on their clothes. Ask them to name other objects that are the same color. This helps them use their color memory to think about the color of things they cannot see at the moment.
- In infant and toddler programs, encourage parents and care givers to play color games with the children that involve suddenly changing the color of one object in a set of three.
- Give directions based on color such as “Come up and get a flannel board piece if you are wearing red. Help your neighbor. If your friend has red, show him where it is.” Or play group games based on color, “Tap your toes if you are wearing black shoes. Rub your tummy if you have on a green shirt.”
- Give children choices based on color; a choice of two is often the best for young children. “Should I put up a red apple or a green one?” “Would you like a yellow balloon sticker today or a blue one?” “What color marker do you want to use today to write your name?”
- Give children opportunities to talk about their favorite color.
- Leave out simple activities or games that involve sorting, matching, and classifying objects by color. Use some of the activities during programs. Give every child a colored object, a simple paper shape for example, and have them group themselves by matching the color of the object they hold.
- When children struggle with learning color names, it often helps to involve other senses. One easy way to use two senses is to have scented markers in a program and help the children learn to associate the color orange with the orange smell of the marker.
- Point out and talk about shades of colors and interesting color names. Talk about light and dark shades and repeat words like “indigo,” “silver,” or “aquamarine.”
- Include toys and activities that encourage color sorting and matching as choice activities for children to use when they visit the library or as part of a circulating toy collection.
- Sing songs about colors and play group games that involve color recognition.
- Send home activities or art projects that involve color recognition.

Numbers and Counting

- Use counting fingerplays, songs, and rhymes. Count only to three with babies and toddlers, five to ten with preschoolers, and give special praise to children who can count beyond ten.
- In baby programs, encourage parents or care givers to play games that involve several repetitions of a certain quantity and then a switch to a new quantity. With older children have them suggest quantities for the group to use. Ask “How many claps should we do?”
- Point out quantities when reading stories, ask questions about quantity, encourage the children to help count objects in illustrations. “Look, the chicken has one chick. Look, here comes two more. How many chicks are there now? Let’s count them.” Always model counting using an organized approach and, when possible, count from left to right and from top to bottom. Touch each object as the children count along to help them develop a sense of one-to-one correspondence and cardinality.
- Build counting exercises into programs. Talk about the number of pages in a book. Talk about how many books will be read during the program. Ask children to stand and stretch and jump three times.
- Point out comparisons in stories. “This bear is much bigger than the first bear.” “Is this fish longer or shorter than the fish on the other page?” “Did you find more pretty leaves than your friend, or fewer, or the same?” Children often confuse “taller” with being “older” or “bigger” than another child.
- Talk about money and coins if they are part of the story. If money is an important element of the story, bring in real coins and bills to talk about. Let each child put a penny or coin in a bank and have the group count as they drop. Bring in money from other countries.
- Point out numerals in books. Numbers might be featured as an element of the illustration or could be the focus of the page. From time to time point out the page numbers.
- Include dominoes, large stringing beads, an abacus, tape measure, or other tools and toys as choices to have out for children to use while they are visiting the library or as part of a circulating toy collection.

- Send activities home that the child can do with an adult involving counting or an art project that involves counting.

Shapes and Spatial Relations

- Use shape books and talk about the shape of things in the illustrations of picture books.
- Include blocks, tangrams, parquetry sets, and shape matching games or puzzles as choices children can use when visiting the library or make them part of circulating toy collections.
- Include large muscle activities in library programs about shapes. Have children hold hands and make a circle. Have them march around the edge of a square rug.
- Send activities home that a parent can use with the child to talk about shapes or an art project created by using different shapes.
- Use cut-and-tell stories that involve folding a piece of paper and making cuts to end up with an object from the story. Do art project that involve folding and cutting paper. Use stories or teach simple origami techniques.

Measurement

- Use books that involve measuring concepts. After the story, help children practice measuring with a piece of string, a tape measure, yard sticks, rulers, or their feet and hands. They can compare their height to that of other children in the group.
- Using routines and repetition in programs helps children develop a sense of time and to understand sequence.
- Stories that involve cooking may offer opportunities to talk about liquid and solid volume and quantities. A liquid measuring exercise can be used as a follow-up activity.
- Musical experiences help children internalize their understanding of measurement because rhythm is really a measure of beat.
- Send activities home that parents or care givers can use with children to explore measurement concepts or an art project that involves measuring.

Time

- Use books about time and the days of the week. Point out the time of day in a story and how children can guess the time by looking at details in the illustration. “The sun is coming up in this picture. Is it morning or night?” “Look at the moon and the stars; do we see them in the daytime or nighttime?” Talk about what will happen “next time” at story time.
- Use stories, fingerplays, and songs that include the days of the week or are about the “time to do something.” Point out the days until the next story time session.
- Use holiday books about celebrations that only occur once a year and about birthdays. Talk about things that happened last year and will happen next year. Talk about waiting a long time for a year to go by.
- Include a toy clock as a choice activity for children to use when they visit the library or as part of a circulating collection of toys.
- Talk about it being “time to start” story time and “time to say good-bye.” Make children aware that the clock in the room guides the librarian to know when to start and end activities. Tell children that there are five more minutes before the big hand points to the six and it will be time to go home.
- Send activities home that parents or care givers can use with children to talk about time or an art activity that involves clocks or sequences.

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PUBLIC LIBRARY PRACTICES THAT FOSTER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSIC AND EARLY LEARNING

Encourage Musical Activities in the Home and at Day Care

Music and language share many elements such as rhythm, beat, pitch, and volume. Public librarians can help make parents aware of the importance of music in their baby's lives.

- Babies can hear music before they are born. Mothers should not put earphones on their abdomens because the fluid in the amniotic sack acts as an amplifier and the music will be too loud for the fetus. Music should be played at normal volume before and after birth.
- Long before babies can talk, they will respond spontaneously when they hear music. Babies usually respond naturally by bouncing, smiling, and waving their arms or kicking their feet. It is good for parents and care givers to dance with the babies in their arms. It doesn't matter what music is used; it can be anything the adult enjoys. However, the volume should not be too loud or it can damage the baby's eardrums.
- Music helps language development and seems to help auditory memory. Children often remember things more easily when they learn a song about them. One example is learning the order of the alphabet by singing the "ABC" song.
- Research shows that music helps the brain keep the flow of language going, especially if there is a disability that involves language delay. Often adults who lose their ability to speak because of a stroke or adults who stutter have no difficulty singing. Music and song pulls them along and helps them get the next sound or word out effortlessly. Singing can help babies learn to talk in much the same way. The baby responds to the song and tries to imitate the words.
- Recent research indicates that there may be a relationship between music and math skills. This is referred to as the "Mozart Effect" because the original studies involved classical music. More recent studies indicate that the type of music used doesn't make a difference. The parts of the brain that light up on a scan during studies when someone is listening to or creating music, are the same areas of the brain that people use to figure out mathematical problems. Thus music exposure including bouncing and dancing is good for babies.
- Parents should sing to their babies. It doesn't matter what songs are sung, just so both the parent and baby like them.
- At first parents can use musical toys, music boxes, or mobiles they can play music for babies on any instrument the parent plays or play recorded music.
- Wrist and ankle rattles allow babies to make sound for themselves by just moving their arms or kicking their feet. As babies mature they often enjoy making their own music with a wooden spoon and a pot, banging a cup on the tray of a high chair, or playing with musical toys and instruments.
- Preliminary research indicates the more experience a child has in making music, especially on a keyboard instrument, the stronger the tie to mathematical ability later on in life. The ability to work out spatial relationships, fractions, and ratios are especially associated with keyboard experience.
- Music can help make daily routines more fun and help the baby cooperate. As babies come to recognize a song and associate it with a particular activity, they learn to anticipate what is going to happen. Recognition can help babies learn what is expected of them. They may become still as their diaper is changed if they associate a dressing song with the process. They may become more relaxed and sleepy if a favorite lullaby is sung each night. They may be more cooperative about being strapped into a car seat if they come to associate a song with going for a ride in the car.

Incorporate Music in Programs

Librarians do not need to play a musical instrument or have a great singing voice to incorporate music into their programs. Numerous wonderful recorded music choices are appropriate for infants, toddlers,

and preschool children. Singing with enthusiasm is more important than a good voice. Some suggestions include:

- Play music before a program as children arrive.
- Start or end the program each time with the same greeting or good-bye song.
- Clap hands in time to a rhythm in songs, chants, and stories.
- Use a book that features illustrations for a familiar song and show the pages as the children sing the song or listen to a recording of it.
- Use stories, songs, or fingerplays where hand actions are done as the words are repeated or sung—"The Itsy Bitsy Spider," or "Going on a Bear Hunt."
- Have parents of babies dance to music and allow older children to move creatively to music. Use both free and directed movement.
- Encourage children to use their bodies and faces to interpret concepts such as "big" and "small," and emotions such as "happy" and "mad."
- Use call and response techniques either in chant or song.
- Play musical games such as: "The Farmer in the Dell" or "Ring-a-Round-the-Rosy."
- Invite children to interpret a story by having them move to music. After reading a story that includes a dance in it or, instead of reading the story, project the video version of it on a wall and let the children dance along. Examples include doing a "Monster Dance" with Max after reading *Where the Wild Things Are* or dancing at the ball after reading *Cinderella*.
- Sing the groups' favorite songs often, even if they want to sing "Jingle Bells" in the summer.
- Invest in a collection of basic rhythm instruments and let the children play along as they sing a song.
- Invite parents who play instruments to come to programs and play their instrument. Tell the children about it and if appropriate, and let them try touch and try to play the instrument.
- Bring musical recordings and videos into the program for checkout by the children at the end of the program.
- Include rhythm instruments in collections of circulating toys.
- Bring cultural instruments such as a thumb piano and maracas into programs or put them on display in the library.

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PUBLIC LIBRARY PRACTICES THAT FOSTER THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING

Good muscle control and coordination of the whole body are necessary before preschool children can begin the formal processes of reading and writing. This coordination involves both large and small muscle groups.

Encourage Muscle Development at Home and at Day Care

Public librarians can help make parents and child care givers aware of the relationship between school success and muscle development.

Eye Muscle Development

- Eye-hand coordination and muscle development are both needed for reading and writing. The eyes are muscles and must be trained to move left to right and top to bottom with smooth coordination.
- The eyes of young children tire easily and need to rest often, in the same way their leg muscle tire more easily than an adult's when walking.
- Eyes require training to automatically move smoothly across the mid-line of the face from left to right and from top to bottom across the horizontal mid-line of the eyes.
- Young children often move their heads rather than their eyes when they begin to read.
- Untrained eyes "jump" as they cross either the vertical or horizontal mid-line which causes the muscles to jerk left to right as they try to refocus on the right place in a line or up and down as they try to drop down from the end of one line of text to the beginning of the next line. Many older children and adults who have learning disabilities or problems reading may have problems of eye muscle control.
- Adult eyes scan about three or four characters to the left and six to eight to the right of the word or letter they are actually looking at directly. This scanning range makes it easy to know what letters and words are coming. Young children have a much narrower character scanning range and can see best the letters they are looking at directly. Young eye muscles must be stretched and trained to reach the adult scanning range.
- Some readers find it helpful to run their finger under the text or use a straight edge to help their eyes keep track of where they are. Children should be encouraged to use this technique as long as they find it helpful. As children become faster readers, they will drop the use of a guide themselves because they will be able to read faster without it.
- Some children and adults with learning disabilities may find a particular color overlay sheet helpful. These overlay sheets are the type used on overhead projectors and are available through office supply stores. Typical colors used include yellow, rose, blue, and green. Usually trial and error is used to find out which color, if any, helps any one reader. A learning disabilities teacher may be able to help explore this possibility for an individual child.

Small Muscle Development

Holding a book and turning pages require children to have good small muscle development. Writing demands even more from these muscles. Children's hands can ache when they start to learn to hold a pencil and write in school. Much of the information and many of the activities listed in this document in the section on pre-writing skills address small muscle development. See that section for more information.

Large Muscle Development

The reading and writing processes involve not only eye and hand muscle control and development, but also coordination of the entire body. Young children must be able to sit and concentrate to learn to read and write with ease. To sit and concentrate for long periods, they must have well-developed large muscle or motor skills as well as fine or small muscle development. Activities that best help large muscles develop may occur more frequently at home, in a day care center, or in a park than in the library. However, librarians can incorporate some large muscle activities into their programs.

Large Muscle Activities

Research done at the University of Glasgow in Scotland in 2004 found the average three-year-old is physically active for only about twenty minutes a day. An hour a day is the minimum recommendation. The preschoolers in the study needed to burn at least 200 more calories a day to balance their daily caloric intake. The primary problem was lack of exercise. Children in the U.S. are experiencing alarming levels of obesity. It may be that American preschool children, like those in Scotland, are getting less than half the recommended exercise they need to maintain normal weight.

When children are ready to read, they are often able to do many of the following activities that involve large muscle development. They need to be encouraged at home and by day care providers to move and exercise their large muscles. Most of these activities are best done outdoors so preschool children need extended periods of time to play outdoors, daily if possible. Librarians can help parents and child care providers understand how important it is to get infants and toddlers outside every day and encourage them to be very active.

- Climb a slide and come down independently.
- Climb safely on a monkey bar gym set.
- "Pump" a swing.
- Hop on one foot, jump rope, and skip.
- Walk easily on a balance beam.
- Go up and down stairs without assistance.
- Ride a two-wheel bicycle without training wheels.
- Catch a large ball in their arms without letting it touch their chest.
- Throw a small ball under and over hand and bounce and catch or dribble a ball.
- Swim and roller skate.

Include Muscle Development Activities in Story Programs

Eye Muscle Development

- Point to the text occasionally and move finger from left to right as the text is read.
- To help train the children's eyes to move from left to right, always place pieces from left to right and from top to bottom when using a flannel board. If children add pieces to the flannel board, help them with sequential positioning or move them into place after the child has put the piece on the board.
- Use a story telling apron for flannel pieces if a child in the program is deaf or has a hearing loss. This helps the child more easily watch both the activity on the apron as well as the librarian's lips. Lipstick helps make the librarian's lips more distinct. Men's facial hair, especially a moustache, makes reading lips more difficult.
- When a swinging motion is mentioned in a story such as with a clock pendulum, ask the children to try to move their eyes from side to side. If a bouncing motion is mentioned, have the children try to look up and down without moving their heads. Demonstrate the technique.
- To imitate blinking lights, invite the children to blink their eyes. Ask them to try to wink which will be much harder.

Small Muscle Development

- Use fingerplays in programs.
- Offer children choices such as blocks and Leggos ©, miniature cars and trucks and dolls, lacing boards, string beads, puzzles and peg boards, or make them part of circulating toy collections when they visit the library.
- Encourage preschool children to use large or chunky chalk, crayons, and markers when they visit the library or come to programs.
- Additional activities listed in the section of this publication on “The Relationship between Writing and Reading” gives numerous pre-writing skills that will help finger and hand muscles develop.

Large Muscle Development

While most activities that involve large muscles will take place outside the library, there are activities public librarians can do during programs to help develop large muscle skills:

- Incorporate parachute play into programs. Colorful, sturdy parachutes are available from companies that carry materials for day care centers and schools. Often a day care center may lend one to a library for the day. Parachutes can help children strengthen upper arms and exercise their legs. The addition of balls offers practice in catching and tossing.
- Play group circle games that involve running in place, skipping, jumping, hopping, moving from a sitting to a standing position and down again.
- Use creative movement and dance exercises in story programs.

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WHAT EVERY PUBLIC LIBRARY CAN DO TO PROMOTE EARLY LEARNING

Create a Parent Shelf or Parent Area

- Set aside one shelf or even a half shelf in the picture book area and put up a sign labeled “Parent Shelf.” It should be in or near the picture book area because this is the most likely place parents of young children will go to select books. Once young children select books, they often become restless, and it is time to leave. Parents often don’t have time to browse the parenting section of the adult non-fiction section.
- Put new parenting materials, especially those items related to birth to five years, and infant brain research on display on this shelf. As they are checked out, replace them with more materials.
- Put back issues of parent magazines on this shelf. Add copies of any of the materials provided to public libraries during the regional training sessions or request free materials on parenting young children from the Child Care Information Center (CCIC), 2109 S. Stoughton Road, Madison, WI 53716; 608-224-5388; www.dpi.state.wi.us/ccic. The CCIC is located at the Wisconsin Reference and Loan Library.
- Request copies of local information for parents of young children.
 - Free immunization schedules
 - Free clinic information
 - Women, Infant and Children Nutrition Program (WIC)
 - Domestic abuse shelter information
 - Directories of local daycare providers
 - Information from the local school district
 - Local event announcements of interest to young children from museums, theaters, and businesses
- Display parenting and entertainment videos appropriate for young children on this shelf.
- Display recorded music intended for very young children.
- Add additional resources from different parts of the collection that might be of interest to parents of babies and young children. Restock the shelf with new materials as the items are checked out.

Bring Parent Resources to Children’s Programs

- Bring parent resource information into story programs or set them out in the children’s area during programs so that parents will notice them.
- Make up attractive bibliographies of current or new resources related to such topics as feeding, potty training, discipline, and developmental stages of infancy and early childhood.

Reach Out to at Least One of the Targeted Parent Groups Each Year

- Try to attend one parent meeting outside the library at least once a year to talk to parents of young children about the importance of reading starting at birth. Bring examples of books and resources to use with very young children. Encourage parents to get a library card and bring their little ones to the library.
- The groups targeted by the DLTC Early Learning Initiative are:
 - teen parents
 - parents who use English as a second language
 - parents who are incarcerated,
 - parents of young children living in poverty, and day care providers who care for children of these targeted families

Talk with Care Givers of Young Children at Least Once a Year

Find out when day care providers in the community meet for training and offer to present a session on the newest books and resources for infants and very young children. Often the training coordinators are looking for speakers.

- Library efforts to reach day care providers are more effective when the library works with existing programs rather than trying to create new training opportunities outside the system that is already set up to provide continuing education.
- Invite day care training coordinators to hold their meetings at the library. Put up a display of new resources and the library's story time schedule while they have their meeting.
- If the library does offer an independent training opportunity for day care providers, assure that daycare providers contact The Registry to get the needed training credits required for continued certification and licensing. (608-222-1123; registry@the_registry.org; or web page at www.wisconsintrainingnetwork.info).
- Welcome day care providers, both home-based and group centers, in the library. When possible allow these providers to bring their children to library programs especially story time sessions.

Continue to Learn More about Infant and Early Learning

- Attend conference sessions related to early learning.
- Attend system-sponsored training sessions on infant programming and early learning.
- Network with early learning professionals in the community to foster more awareness about the earliest years, and the impact they have on children as they start school.

Network with Others in the Community Interested in Early Learning

- Be part of the local network of people interested in young children and join advocacy efforts to assure the local children's emotional, health, and educational needs are being addressed.
- Make it a point to know the directors of local day care centers, Head Start, and Even Start programs.
- Attend meeting of agencies that offers services to young children.
- Display brochures from programs like WIC and pregnancy hot lines.
- Participate in community celebrations for the Week of the Young Child.

Evaluate Programming Needs

- Look at the ages and needs of the children in the community. Investigate the services currently available for birth to age three. Determine if there is a need to offer infant and toddler programs.
- If there is, make plans to reorganize children's services to allow for them. Make decisions about things that will be dropped to allow the new service. Make sure the entire staff has a basic understanding of why the change is necessary. Assure staff members involved with programming have the training to feel comfortable doing them.

Assure Adequate Funding to Provide Resources for Infants and Toddlers

- The library must assure that it has an adequate supply of books for infants and toddlers to meet demand and offers a good selection.
- Infant and toddler book collections have to be replaced regularly because of the heavy use and abuse they are subjected to by the babies.
- The library should assure it has musical recordings created for infants and toddlers.
- Adequate parenting resources that address the needs of very young children should be part of every library collection.

Part 2

Sample Library Programs for Infants and Toddlers

OVERVIEW OF INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Infant and toddler programs differ from the more traditional programs libraries offer for children ages three to five. The DLTL's Early Learning Initiative targets parents, early childhood educators, and day care providers who are least likely to know the importance of reading, talking, singing, and playing with babies. The intent is to get these adults to read and interact with their infants and toddlers, and to get the children to focus on the parents or care givers. Therefore, the role of the librarian is one of a "model." In these programs, the librarian demonstrates ways to hold a baby and read a book at the same time, how to do the movements for the songs and finger activities; and in general how to get the baby's attention.

Bonding research is behind this concept of librarian as model rather than the direct provider of the interaction. Babies need to bond with their parents and care giver, not the librarian. The intent is to develop parents' and care givers' understanding about the importance of the activities being demonstrated, and to build their confidence that they are interacting well with the babies. Librarians need to make a philosophical transition to their role when interacting with babies and toddlers. Typically, librarians tend to perceive their programming efforts as benefiting an individual child or parent. In these programs, the librarians are delivering services to the child and adult as a unit.

This is a very different purpose and approach than programs for older children where one of the goals is to help children understand how to act in a group and the librarian is the focus of the children's attention. Research indicates that young children are not developmentally able to control their behavior in group settings. Babies and toddlers are interested in and enjoy looking at each other. However, one study found babies prefer to interact with only one other child or with small groups of up to about five other babies rather than larger groups.

Open space and room to move around is an important consideration when planning programs for toddlers. Research indicates toddlers are more sensitive to crowding than older preschoolers. When toddlers are in crowded areas they tend to become more aggressive, loud, and cause more interruptions with their behavior. In response, parents try to restrict the movements of the children. In rooms where more floor space is available, toddlers engage in more playful interactions; are more willing to join in the activities; and there is a decrease in passive, on-looker behavior.

Building Design Considerations Related to Serving Infants and Toddlers

An effective physical design and layout of both the library and the program room sets a tone that welcomes parents and early childhood providers with infants and toddlers, and encourages return visits. Accessible entrances and electronic doors are as important for adults who have a child in a stroller as they are for people who use wheelchairs. The distance it takes to walk or carry a toddler to the appropriate area can make the trip easy or challenging. The need to go up or down steps or walk through adult or quiet areas to get to an elevator can discourage repeat visits by adults who have young children. Angry stares, concerned glances, and complaints by other patrons or staff when a group of preschool children arrive for a visit or as an adult tries to calm a fussy baby or reason with an uncooperative toddler, can become barriers and discourage return visits.

Several years ago, the Wisconsin Library Association's (WLA) Youth Services Section (YSS) sponsored regional bus tours to libraries that were recommended as being particularly "kid-friendly" in parts of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Illinois. Some of the features identified during those tours are things that libraries can add or change to make the physical environment more compatible with services for infants and toddlers. All libraries on the tours were fully accessible. They had electronic doors at the entrance. Electronic doors are not required under the Americans with Disabilities Act, but they are extremely helpful to parents or care givers who are carrying a baby or who come to the library with a child in a stroller.

A great deal of consideration was given to restroom design in these libraries. Restroom features included:

- A children's restroom and drinking fountain located in or near the children's department.

- Family restrooms in which a parent can accompany the child while they use the toilet or where it is easier for them to assist a child or other family member who has a disability or needs assistance for other reasons. Family restrooms also allow privacy for a man assisting a little girl or a woman helping a young boy. Men especially mention not wanting to take preschool girls into the regular men's restroom because other men might be using the urinals.
- A diaper changing deck in both the men and women's restrooms and in the family restroom.
- A "jump seat" in at least one stall so that an adult who is carrying a baby or young child can put her in the seat while the adult uses the toilet, rather than placing the child on the floor.
- A quiet, sanitary area with a rocking chair for nursing mothers in a location that is both comfortable and semi-private but not a restroom.
- At least one toilet set at about the height of a potty chair for use by toddlers working on potty training. The Portage County Library in Stevens Point has a "Three Bears" restroom, so named for the three different heights of the toilets. One was for beginners at potty chair height, one a little higher for children who were already potty trained but liked to touch the floor with their feet, and a standard height toilet for adults.
- Stable step stools to help children reach sinks and drinking fountains.

Many of the libraries on the tour had interesting "kid-friendly" program rooms and outdoor areas.

- Non-carpeted flooring to make cleaning spills from snacks or art projects easy.
- Heated floors that assured the children sitting on the floor were comfortable in winter.
- Sinks to make snack or project clean up and sanitation easy.
- Walls covered with surfaces to make it easy to set up and take down displays using tape or pins.
- Walls with built-in puppet theaters with areas that were easy to open and close to allow for multiple level appearances by the puppets.
- The rooms used for children's programs did not have to be shared or used for general library meetings, adult programs, or outside groups which eliminated the need to completely strip down or set them up for children's programs.
- Velcro-friendly fabric walls help avoid the safety hazards of pins, staples or tacks and allow extremely flexible configurations.
- Outdoor performance space, some with terraced seating and some way to keep children in the area for programs held outside on nice days, for large muscle or noisy activities, or for large family events. Often these areas were equipped with electricity and a sound system.
- Outdoor gardens where children could help with the planting, maintenance, and harvesting as part of their weekly program activities.
- Outdoor climbing and playground equipment, fountains, and sculpture or other elements that young children were welcome to explore or climb.
- Co-location with a community park.

Other kid-friendly features highlighted on the tours were:

- A small semi-private area to comfort a fussy baby or calm an over-excited toddler. One library on the tour had a small area designed like a home living room with lights that could be dimmed and a rocking chair to quiet and calm young children.
- Low windows or window seats so that children can look at what was happening outside.
- Interesting nooks and crannies for one-on-one book sharing or quiet time.
- Areas set up for active play that did not interfere with other library activities.
- Books for infants and toddlers, and sometimes for older preschoolers, shelved in bins instead of on shelves to make it easier for the children to make selections, and for the library staff to keep baby and picture books in good order with a minimum of effort.
- Portable safety gates to corral toddlers in a specific area while the adults selected materials in that area.
- In-house shopping carts with seats for young children to leave an adult's hands free to select materials, and make it easy to manage the materials and child at the same time.
- Live animals such as fish in aquariums or visiting animals for programs.
- Toys for in-house use that were easy to supervise, generally safe for all ages, easy to clean, met a range of developmental needs, and were low maintenance for staff.

- A large area in the children's room designed for large muscle activities, fantasy play, reading nooks, or performance space.
- Special features such as sculptures, architectural design elements that carried a theme from the tables and chairs to the ends of the book stacks, doors scaled to the height of young children, and floor covering that created a path drawing children to the various areas.
- Large central-design creations such as a two-story light house (Milwaukee), and a paddle boat stretching the length of a room with a pilot house and life-sized pilot wheel children could turn (LaCrosse). The new Franklin Public Library has a life-sized artificial Kapok tree. These architectural elements are used for fantasy play and as reading nooks.
- Office space for youth librarians in the children's area with windows so the librarian can observe the floor as needed.
- Large storage space adjacent to the children's area for props and craft items needed by children's librarians.
- Book, puppet, and other resource materials set aside primarily for program purposes to make it easy for the librarian to keep core material sets together and assure they were available when needed.
- Seating scaled for children of different ages and comfortable seating for adults, including double rockers so the adult and child could sit side-by-side, or two stable rockers, one sized for adults, the other for young children.
- Areas such as patios or in-house coffee shops where food can be purchased and eaten without leaving the library. Some areas included microwaves for the public in which adults could heat food.
- Check-out areas designed for young children at which they might receive special attention and services such as having a book character stamped on their hand, receive a sticker, or be able to put pennies in a bank for the building fund. Many of these counters had a stable step stool or built-in steps so the child could get up higher and closer to see everything that was happening. The steps were either portable or designed in such a way that they did not interfere with access by people who use wheelchairs.
- Easy access check-out areas for the convenience of parents with young children.
- A parenting shelf or area in the youth department with rotating materials from the regular adult collection and community resource brochures.
- Computers placed at appropriate levels for access by preschoolers, specialized computer programs, over-sized or colorful keyboards designed specifically for young children, and alternative computer input devices such as switches for use by children with disabilities. Computers in many of these children's areas were positioned to allow for maximum supervision by staff and to facilitate staff assistance as needed.

Safety and Sanitation Issues for Infants and Toddlers in Public Libraries

Every library should evaluate their children's area for safety and sanitation concerns, even if they are not offering infant and toddler programs. Parents bring young children to the library even if they are not coming for programs. Infants and toddlers are active and noisy. They learn through their senses and often explore things by putting them in their mouths. They learn by touching and manipulating things. In order to participate in the adult world, mobile babies climb up on furniture, jump off edges, and hang from things in the environment. Meeting their needs, understanding their active learning style, and addressing safety concerns often require librarians to re-think their space and reconfigure some areas.

Librarians should do a room check for possible toddler hazards in both the children's area and the program room. Make sure window cords are not hanging low enough for toddlers to reach them. Use safety plugs in all electrical outlets. Be sure all indoor plants are non-toxic. Shelving and display units should be safe enough not to fall down on a child should a toddler tug at them or try to climb them. Staircases are always a potential hazard because crawlers and toddlers can tumble down them. The safety posts on open staircases may very well meet building codes and yet be spaced far enough apart for a young child to slip between the bars. Some libraries purchase portable section dividers designed primarily for infant care centers or child safety gates for use by parents and care givers to keep the toddlers corralled in one area.

Public libraries often have in-house activities and toys for young children to use when they visit. Safety and sanitation must always be taken into consideration with any toys and materials placed in the children's area. Because toddlers can get into dangerous situations very quickly, even under close supervision, toys selected for in-house use should keep safety for the very youngest in mind. Toys should be smooth and have round edges. To avoid choking hazards, they should not fit through the circle made when an adult touches his thumb and pointer finger together. Toys should not form a seal around the child's mouth and nose. All in-house library toys should be stable and durable.

Toys in a library environment should also be washable. Libraries should have a plan in place to assure the toys are cleaned on a regular basis. Since infants and toddlers explore the world around them by putting things in their mouths, one technique to clean the board books and toys in the children's area or those used during a baby program, is to keep a container of regular wet wipes handy. During a program, the librarian can ask the parents to wipe the materials off when their child is finished with them. When more in-depth sanitation is required, the national standard is to use a fresh bleach solution of a quarter cup of household bleach for every gallon of cool water, or one tablespoon for every quart. Bleach solutions should not be used when children are present.

How Infant and Toddler Programs and Services Differ from Those Traditionally Provided for Preschool Children Ages Three-to-Five-Years

There are many differences between programs designed for infants and toddlers and the more traditional programs for children ages three to five years. One issue related to programming for infants and toddlers is the advantage of keeping the story room or other space available after the program for parents and other adults who bring children to the library. It is not necessary for the librarian to remain. Often the children want to stay and play with the materials in the room or look at one of the books used in the program. The library can provide an important service for parents and home day care providers simply by allowing them to remain in the program room after a session is over. Many of these adults may feel isolated and lack family or peer support. The program allows them to meet other adults with children who are all about the same age. They form their own support networks and may create play groups. This interaction may help them understand the behavior of their children, and learn new behavior management and feeding techniques, allows them to compare the development of their child to that of other children in the group. The comparison may help reassure them that their child's development is appropriate or encourage them to seek an evaluation if their child's development is significantly delayed or advanced. It takes time and experimentation for a librarian to become comfortable with changes and planning and implementing programs for a new age group. The chart that follows compares some of the differences between baby and preschool programs.

For More Information

- American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. 2002. Selecting An Appropriate Sanitizer. In *Caring for Our Children National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care*, Aurora, CO. National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/HTMLVersion/Appendix_I.html
- Dewe, M. 1995. *Planning and Designing Libraries for Children and People*. London, United Kingdom: Library Association Planning.
- Feinber, Sandra and Diantha D. Schull. Family Place Libraries Transforming Public Libraries To Serve Very Young Children and Their Families. *Zero to Three*, Vol. 21 (3); December 2000/January 2001.
- Feinber, Sandra, Joan F. Kuchner, and Sari Feldman. 1998. *Learning Environments for Young Children: Rethinking Library Spaces and Services*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Kuchner, Joan F. Creating Welcoming Library Environments for Infants, Toddlers and Their Families. *Zero to Three*, Vol. 21 (3); December 2000/January 2001.

COMPARISON OF SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS AND TRADITIONAL PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Infant and Toddler Programs

1. Babies always attend with a parent or care giver, and the adults are active participants.
2. The audience is actually the parent or care giver, not the babies.
3. The babies may be sleeping, crying, or moving around the room.
4. Babies may be eating or nursing.
5. The length of the program is 15-20 minutes of interaction and perhaps a minimum of ten minutes of planned time for adults to visit and network among themselves.
6. The babies and adults may be using different books than the one the librarian is reading.
7. More time is spent on activities than on reading the books.
8. Adults manipulate the babies during songs and fingerplays.
9. Materials are selected to demonstrate concepts for the adults, and are appropriate to use with infants.
10. The most important outcomes of the program will occur later when the parent or care giver does the activities and reads the books to the baby at home after the program.
11. Activities change about every two or three minutes with the average book taking about a minute to read.
12. A support and social network evolves among the parents because they are interested in each other and share common experiences at this time in their lives.

Preschool Programs

1. Parents may or may not attend and if they do, they may or may not be active participants.
2. Children are the primary audience.
3. Children are usually seated, quiet, and attentive.
4. Food is usually not permitted, or is given out at the end of the program.
5. The program is usually between 30-40 minutes and may be longer if a craft is done. Children usually leave at the end of the program.
6. The librarian is the only one with a book, and children are looking at it with the librarian.
7. More time is spent on reading books than on other related activities.
8. Children do the fingerplays and actions along with the librarian.
9. Materials are selected that appeal to the interests of children.
10. The most important aspects of the program take place at the library with a secondary expectation that similar books will be read and activities repeated in the home.
11. Activities change about every five to seven minutes with the average book taking about five to seven minutes to read.
12. A social network often evolves because of the interest the children take in each other, and they want to play with the other children outside the library.

Introduction to Sample Library Programs for Infants and Toddlers

One of the needs identified by the Early Learning Initiative's planning committee was to have sample programs developed to help librarians who want to begin to offer infant and toddler programs, but were unsure how to go about doing programs for these very young audiences.

The following sample programs were developed in cooperation with the planning committee who helped select the topics, books, and support materials. Training sessions were set up during 2003 with the cooperation of the seventeen regional public library systems in Wisconsin. At these sessions, information was presented on infant brain development and early learning theory. The DLTCL's Youth and Special Needs Consultant made a presentation on how to do infant and toddler programs based on the developmental information. The presentation included a demonstration of the use of the books and resource materials purchased for this project. Every youth librarian in Wisconsin was encouraged to attend one of the training sessions. The resources purchased with LSTA money will be distributed to regional systems that support infant and toddler programming with sets of materials librarians can borrow for their local programs.

At the leadership conference, librarians commented on the need for parental materials written at a very low reading level and the need to have materials translated into other languages. Part 3 of this document includes this information for parents. The reproducible handouts in the last section of this publication are intended to match the topic area of these sample programs. However, they may be used by any public library in any way to help promote early learning. Spanish translations are also included they can be printed on the back of the English version or used just in Spanish. Librarians may want to include their own local information on the back of parent handouts which is encouraged. DLTCL requests that all copies include the DLTCL's credit line.

Each program includes some poems, fingerplays, or activities in Spanish and English. To help librarians approximate the pronunciation of the Spanish words, phonetic spellings are included. The fingerplays and action activities were re-written for infants and toddlers. Typically these children are too young to independently do the motions in most fingerplays. The activities suggested give the parent, care giver, or early childhood teacher a way to use these traditional rhymes with the children that is intended to encourage touching to maximize the bonding potential.

To encourage librarians to use music in their programs, an effort was made to identify only about six or seven recordings including enough selections to serve as the core for these sample programs. Although these model programs were designed for infants and toddlers, each program has a set of "Age Appropriate Learning Activities." These extended activity ideas begin at birth and continue to age five. Some librarians may want to use the same program concept for both the very youngest and for traditional story times for preschool-aged children.

Some suggestions for adapting the programs for infants and babies with special needs are included. However, there will be more extensive suggestions in the revision and expansion of the DLTCL publication, *Public Library Services to Children with Special Needs: A Plan for Wisconsin*, scheduled for development in 2005. The revision will be both a planning and resource guide.

The program suggestion section is followed by sets of reproducible parent handouts that can be customized and distributed to parents and care givers. Any public library may reproduce these handouts as long as they retain the credit line. Some handouts are designed so that libraries can add customization to the back. If libraries customize them by adding bibliographies, etc., they should add their own credit line to that side of the handout.

Parent Handouts for these Units

A set of parent handouts has been prepared to accompany the following programming units. They can be re-printed and customized by public libraries as long as the credit lines are retained. They are written at an approximate grade four reading level with simple grammar to make it easier for parents who cannot read well to use them. They are available in both English and Spanish. To access these parent handouts, go to: www.dpi.wi.us/dltcl/pld/earlylearning.html.

BABY BODIES

Suggested Baby Bodies Books

+ indicates CCBC Choices book

- Bauer, Marion Dane. 2003. *Toes, Ears, Nose: A Lift The Flap Book*. Little Simon. 0-689-984712-2. Board Book.
- Bowie, C.W. 1998. *Busy Toes*. Whispering Coyote/Charlesbridge. 1-58089-056-3. Board Book.
- Boynton, Sandra. 1995, originally published 1984. *Horns to Toes and in Between*. Little Simon. 0-671-49319-1. Board Book.
- +Carle, Eric. 1999. *From Head To Toe*. HarperCollins. 0-694-01301-3. Board Book.
Spanish Version: *Delacabeza a los Pies*. 2003. 0-0605-1302-0.
- Cauley, Lorinda Bryan. 2001. *Clap Your Hands*. Putnam. 0-3992-3710-0. Board Book.
- Emberley, Ed. 1993. *Go Away Big Green Monster*. Little Brown. 0-316-23653-5.
- Golding, Kim. 2000. *Fantastic Feet*. Cartwheel. 0-439-10848-9. Board Book, touch and feel.
- Golding, Kim. 2000. *Happy Hands*. Cartwheel. 0-439-10847-0. Board Book, touch and feel.
- +Hindley, Judy. 1999. *Eyes, Nose, Fingers and Toes—A First Book All About You*. Candlewick. 0-763-0440-2. Paperback.
- Katz, Karen. 2000. *Where is Baby's Bellybutton? A Lift The Flap Book*. Little Simon. 0-6898-3560-4.
- Miller, Margaret. 1998. *Baby Faces*. Little Simon. 0-689-81911-0.
- Newcome, Zita. 1996. *Toddlerobics*. Candlewick. 1-5640-2809-7.
- +Oxenbury, Helen. 1999. *Clap Hands*. Little Simon. 0-6898-1984-6. Board Book.
- Oxenbury, Helen. 1995. *I Can*. Candlewick. 1-564-02547-0. Board Book.
- +Paul, Ann Whitford. 1998. *Hello Toes, Hello Feet*. DK Ink. 0-789-42481-9.
- Perkins, Al. 1998, originally published 1969. *Hand, Hand, Finger, Thumb*. Random House. 0-679-89048-3. Board Book.
- Quinlan, Patricia. 1996. *Baby's Feet*. Annick Press. 1-55037471-0.
- Quinlan, Patricia. 1996. *Baby's Hands*. Annick Press. 1-55037-470-2.
- +Suen, Anastasia. 2002. *Toddler Two/Dos Anos*. Lee and Low. 1-58430-054-X. Board Book.
- +Thomas, Joyce Carol. 1999. *You Are My Perfect Baby*. HarperCollins. 0-694-01096-0.
- +Tracy Tom. 1999. *Show Me!* HarperCollins. 0-694-01039-1.
- Wood, Audrey. 1995. *Piggies*. Voyager. 0-1520-0217-0.

Suggested Recorded Music for Baby Bodies

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Baby's Face," "Head and Shoulders," "Knock Knock," "Little Flea," "Open Them, Shut Them," "This Little Piggy Went to the Market," "Tummy Button," and "Two Little Eyes."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDLD. Cassette with words. See "Touch Your Toes to Your Nose," "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes," "Open, Shut Them," and "Pat-A-Cake."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Peek-A-Boo," "Piggy Toes," and "Oh What a Miracle."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi in Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "Knees Up Mother Brown."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See "Brush Your Teeth" and "Spider on the Floor."
- Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. 1995. Sony Wonder. 1-57330-513-8. Cassette includes words. See "One Fine Face."

Suggested Props for Baby Body Story Times

- The most important prop for these activities is the baby herself.
- Safety mirror (available from numerous sources—Lamaze First Mirror and First Years Musical/Convertible Mirror are two examples).
- Wrist rattles (available from many sources).
- Flannel Board Face Set (Constructive Playthings).
- Baby blanket.
- Towel (to be rolled to prop up baby, or let him push against with his feet).
- Washable baby doll.

Extended Program Ideas for Baby Bodies

Reaching and Stretching

Many of the activities encourage babies and toddlers to reach and stretch their large muscles and help develop coordination.

Mirror Play

Babies of all ages like to look at themselves in the mirror, and there are numerous games to play with mirrors.

Touching and Naming Body Parts

Numerous activities are suggested that involve naming body parts and touching or blowing on various parts of the body to help the child develop a sense of body awareness.

Group Game—Baby Hokey Pokey

The parent moves each of the baby's arms and legs as called for in the song. Parents of toddlers can suspend the child in the air just off the floor and tip the right body part as needed.

Art Suggestion—Painted Feet

Use tempera paint on the bottoms of the baby's feet and make a print on a sheet of paper. Older toddlers might enjoy having the bottoms of their feet painted and then making tracks on a long roll of paper laid on the floor. Have newspaper, water, and paper towels out to wash off each child's feet.

Suggested Baby Bodies Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

Face

“Little Cheek, Little Chin”

Little cheek

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent touches each body part as it is named.)

Little chin

Here is where the food comes in.

Little eyes.

Little nose.

Now, I'll kiss your little toes.

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent kisses child's toes.)

This is a fun activity to do while the child is looking into a mirror.

“Eye Winker, Chin Chopper”

Little eye – winker

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently touches child’s eyelid and winks.)

Little nose – smeller

*(Infants—Parent touches child’s nose and sniffs.)
(Toddlers—Parent touches child’s nose and they sniff together.)*

Little mouth – eater

*(Infants—Parent touches baby’s lip and makes chewing motion.)
(Toddlers—Parent and child make chewing motions.)*

Little chin – chopper

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps child’s chin.)

Chin, Chin, Chin

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently and briefly tickles or shakes child’s chin.)

Hands and Fingers

“They’re a Part of Me”

Sing to tune of “Wheels on the Bus”

I make my hands go clap, clap, clap

*(Infants—Parent claps the baby’s hands together.)
(Toddlers—Parent models clapping.)*

Clap, clap, clap. Clap, clap, clap

They’re a part of me.

(Infants—Parent crosses baby’s arms across the baby’s chest.)

Continue with:

I make my eyes go blink...

*(Infants—Parent blinks eyes at baby.)
(Toddlers—Parent and child face each other and blink eyes.)*

I make my legs go kick...

*(Infants—Parent gently kicks each of the baby’s legs.)
(Toddlers—Parent models kicking motion.)*

I make my nose go sniff...

*(Infants—Parent sniffs nose and touches baby’s nose.)
(Toddlers—Parent and child face each other, wrinkle noses, and sniff.)*

I make my lips go kiss...

*(Infants—Parent kisses baby on each “kiss” word.)
(Toddlers—Parent and toddler kiss each other on the “kiss” words.)*

“These Are Baby’s Fingers”

These are baby’s fingers.

*(Infants—Parent gently touches the baby’s fingers.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up and wiggle fingers.)*

These are baby’s toes.

*(Infants—Parent gently wiggles the baby’s toes.)
(Toddlers—Parent tickles child’s bare toes.)*

This is baby’s belly button.

(Infants—Parent gently circles the baby’s belly button with finger.)

Round and round it goes.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child point to belly button.)
(Infants—Parent traces the baby's belly button then kisses baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent makes a circular motion around the child's belly button.)

“Open Them, Shut Them”

Open them, shut them.

(Infants—Parent opens and closes hands in front of the baby's face.)

Open them, shut them.

(Toddlers—Parent and child open and close fingers.)

Now put them in your lap.

(Infants—Parent takes baby's hands and puts them together in her lap or on her chest.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child fold hands in lap.)

Creep them, creep them.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks fingers up the child's arm to the chin, then to the lips.)

Right up to your chin.

Open your mouth.

(Infants—Parent opens mouth and snaps it shut suddenl as baby watches.)

But do not let them in!

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to put her fingers in child's mouth but then helps child use her hands to cover her mouth.)

“I Have Ten Little Fingers”

I have ten little fingers.

(Infants—Parent holds up both of baby's hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up all fingers.)

And they all belong to me.

(Infants—Parent points baby's finger at himself.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child point to herself.)

I can make them do things.

(Infants—Parent wiggles the baby's fingers.)

Would you like to see?

(Toddlers—Parent and child wiggle fingers in air.)

I can put them up so high.

(Infants—Parent gently raises baby's hands over head.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child raise hands over head.)

I can put then down so low.

(Infants—Parent lowers the baby's hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child bend down and touch the floor.)

I can make them hide.

(Infants—Parent covers baby's hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child hide hands behind back.)

And I can fold them just so.

(Infants—Parent folds baby's hands together on lap or chest.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child fold hands in lap.)

“A Pretty Little Hand” “Qué Linda Manito!”

From Puerto Rico (kay lean'-da mahn-ee'-toe)

How pretty, how little

Qué linda manito.

(Infants—Parent holds and kisses the

This sweet baby's hand.	(kay lean'-da mahn-ee'-toe) Que tiene el bebé (kay tay-en'-nay el bay-bay')	<i>baby's hand.</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent massages child's hand.)</i>
So soft—Oh! So pretty.	Qué linda, qué mona, (kay lean'-da kay mah-na')	
How lovely it is.	Qué bonita es. (kay bo-knee'-ta ace)	
Fingers so tiny.	Pequeños deditos (pea-kay'-n-youse day-dee'-toe-z)	<i>(Infants—Parent strokes and kisses each of the fingers.)</i>
Like small rays of sun.	Rayitos del sol (ray-yee'-toe-z dell sole)	<i>(Toddlers—Parent strokes each of the child's fingers.)</i>
Around and around	Que gire que gire (kay he'-ray, kay he'-ray)	<i>(Infants—Parent flutters fingers in front of baby's face.)</i>
Like a twinkling sunflower.	Como un girasol. (coe'-moe oon he'-ra-sole)	<i>(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to put their fingers at the sides of their face like petals on a flower.)</i>

Feet and Toes

“Wiggle Your Toes”

Sing to tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”

Wiggle, wiggle, wiggle your toes	<i>(Infants—Parent gently wiggles the baby's toes.)</i>
Wiggle them up and down	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child sit with bare feet in the air and wiggle toes.)</i>
Wiggle them fast	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parents help child follow speed and the action mentioned.)</i>
Wiggle them slow	
Wiggle them all around.	
Continue with:	
Wiggle your fingers	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps the child make the actions.)</i>
Clap your hands	
Stomp your feet.	

“Wake Up Toesies”

Sing to tune of Frère Jacques

Wake up toes, wake up toes	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent massages or tickles each body part and kisses it.)</i>
I love you, I love you.	
Can you say good morning?	
I love you, I love you.	
Continue with:	
Wake up legs	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Repeat for each body part.)</i>
Wake up knees	
Wake up hips.	

“Ten Little Toesies”

Sing to the tune of “One Little, Two Little, Three Little...”

One little, two little, three little toes.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles each toe in turn as they are counted.)

Four little, five little, six little toes.

Seven little, eight little, nine little toes.

Ten little baby toes.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent tickles toes on last line.)

Whole Body

“Baby Hokey Pokey”

Form a circle to do this group game.

You put your right arm in.

(Infants—Parent holds up each of the baby’s arms or legs in the air and gently shakes it.)

You put your right arm out.

You put your right arm in.

And you shake it all about.

(Toddlers—Parent helps the child put the body part in and out and then gently shakes that part with child.)

You do the Baby Hokey Pokey.

That’s what it’s all about!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child clap hands.)

Continue with:

Left arm

Right arm

Left leg

End with whole self.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent lifts child off floor and tips him in and out of the circle.)

“My Head, My Ears, My Neck”

Sing to tune of “Farmer in the Dell”

My head, my ears, my neck.

(Infants—Parent touches each body part as it is mentioned.)

My head, my ears, my neck.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child touch or show each body part.)

Hi ho the derry o

My head, my ears, my neck.

Continue with:

My nose, my cheeks, my mouth.

My thumbs, my hands, my arms.

“On My Face”

On my face I have a nose.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent tap child’s nose.)

And way down here I have ten toes.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles child’s toes.)

I have two eyes that I can blink.

*(Infants—Parent blinks eyes as baby watches.)
(Toddlers—Parent models blinking for child as they face each other.)*

I have a head to help me think.

*(Infants—Parent gently taps baby on the forehead.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child put hands on head.)*

I have a chin and very near.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently wiggles baby's chin.)

I have two ears to help me hear.

*(Infants—Parent wiggles baby's ears.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child wiggle both ears.)*

I have a mouth with which to speak.

*(Infants—Parent touches baby's lips.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child point to mouth.)*

And when I run, I use my feet.

(Infants—Parent gently moves baby's feet as if running.)

(Toddlers—Parent models running in place.)

Here are arms to hold up high.

(Infants—Parent moves baby's arms over head.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put arms over head.)

And here's a hand to wave good-bye.

(Infants—Parent waves to baby and then helps baby wave back.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child exchange waves.)

“Nibble My Head”

Butter and bread, nibble my head.

(Infants—Parent nibbles at or kisses each body part as it is mentioned.)

Potatoes and peas, nibble my knees.

(Toddlers—Parent holds child on lap and pretends to nibble on the body parts mentioned. Make munching and smacking noises.)

Hot dog and jello, nibble my elbow.

Veggies and meat, nibble my feet.

Banana and pear, nibble my hair.

Spinach pie, nibble my eye.

Bacon and egg, nibble my leg.

Peaches and plums, nibble my thumbs.

Ahhhh!

Nice and yummy, all in my tummy!

(Infants—Parent pats baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent rubs child's tummy.)

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For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Music and Dance—“Where Is Thumbkin?”

Appropriate Learning Activities for Baby Bodies

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

Face and Head

0-3 Months—Gazing

New babies need quiet time to just practice looking and focusing their eyes. New babies like to practice looking at a parent's face. When the baby is alert, find a quiet place. Turn off background noise because new infants are easily over-stimulated. The parent props the baby on the parent's knees and they gaze into each other's eyes. This helps the baby relax and is an excellent bonding activity that fosters healthy emotional and social development. It also helps develop visual and listening skills.

The parent softly says the baby's name, makes faces at him, smiles, raises eyebrows, opens and closes her mouth, or sticks out her tongue. The baby may watch intently and may try to imitate the expressions. Even very young babies may stick out their tongue in imitation of a parent. If the baby turns away frequently or becomes restless, the baby is trying to indicate it is time to stop. A baby needs to withdraw from intense bursts of interaction to allow his brain time to process what he has learned.

Let a baby look at himself in a mirror. The infant won't recognize himself until about 15 months, but he will be interested in looking at his own face. Mirror play helps the baby develop his sight as well as learn social and emotional skills. Hold a mirror up for the baby when the baby is laying on his back or hold the baby and let him look into a mirror on a wall. When the baby is on his stomach for play time, the mirror can be placed in front of his face to encourage him to lift his head. This will help him strengthen his neck and back muscles.

(Gazing offers practice in focusing eyes and beginning muscle control. A baby develops her mouth and eye muscles before any others.)

0-3 Months—Can You Hear Me Now?

Put the baby in an infant seat in the middle of the room. Walk around the room and say her name, sing, or just talk to her. Move from one spot to another, sometimes near the baby and sometimes farther away. Move close so the baby can both see and hear the parent, and gradually move away so he can only hear the parent.

(This helps develop the baby's listening skills and helps him practice locating the source of a sound.)

3-6 Months—Nosy, Nosy, Nose

Hold baby so he can see the parent's face. While the parent says "nosy, nosy, nosy, nose" gently lift him and bring him up to the parent's face and touch the parent's nose to his nose on the last word. If he enjoys the game, repeat it several times. He may try to move his nose toward the parent's. Stop if he doesn't like the game.

(Gentle touching helps a baby feel secure and touching and naming body parts helps the baby learn about his body.)

3-6 Months—Familiar Faces

By three months a baby can recognize familiar faces. For this reason one of her favorite books may be one the parent makes. Pictures and photos of faces are likely to hold the baby's interest. Photos of Mommy, Daddy, Grandmother, and other important people in the baby's life can be enlarged and glued to cardboard and covered with clear contact paper, put into sheet protectors, or a photo album. If the parent points to the people and names them, it helps the baby connect faces with names. To protect original photographs, copies of them can be made inexpensively in black and white on a copier.

(This develops visual discrimination skills and promotes social development.)

3-6 Months—Paper Plate Face Puppets

Draw a face on the back of a paper plate. Make a slit for the mouth, cut out a paper tongue, slide it through the slit, and fold it down so that it can be wiggled from the back side of the paper plate. Cut another paper plate in half and tape the two front sides together. Insert one hand between the two plates and use the face as a puppet. Have the face talk to the baby and move in and out toward the baby's face. Another version of this activity involves drawing a face on a paper cup that fits over the parent's hand. Cut a hole for the nose and stick a finger through the hole and wiggle it as the puppet talks.

(These puppets help young babies focus their eyes, promote vocabulary development related to face parts, and stimulates conversation.)

6-9 Months—Faces in the Mirror

Hold the baby and face a mirror together. Smile, make silly faces and sounds, make different lip sounds, make animal sounds, hold up or gently shake different parts of the baby's body.

(The neuron paths for vision develop very early so babies need stimulating things to look at and observe. This also helps the baby's eyes focus.)

9-12 Months—Where's Your Nose?

The parent touches the baby's nose and says, "Here's my nose. Where's your nose?" If the baby can touch his nose, praise and clap for him and then do another body part. If he doesn't touch his nose, touch it for him and say, "There's your nose."

(Gentle touching is good for a baby and helps relieve stress. This activity helps the baby see where the body part is on the parent's face and connects that location with her own.)

9-12 Months—Let Me See Your Teeth

A parent often finds out a baby's first tooth has emerged when a spoon goes into his mouth and there is a "click" as it touches the new tooth. A baby often enjoys the attention he gets for showing his teeth and may willingly open his mouth to show them off. The parent should show her teeth to the baby and point to both hers and the baby's when talking about them. Some babies bite with their new teeth when they feel something in their mouths. A parent should use caution when using a finger to feel the teeth, and remind the baby to keep his mouth open.

(Talking about and touching emerging teeth helps the baby develop awareness of his mouth, teeth, and tongue.)

12-18 Months—Making Faces in the Mirror

At about a year, a baby develops a sense of self as separate from others. Look into a mirror with a baby and make faces which the baby may imitate. Touch a body part, name the part, and then touch the same part on the baby and name it again.

(This helps refine the baby's sense of body awareness, develops vocabulary and promotes self-concept and social skills.)

18-24 Months—Can You Hide Like Me?

Another game that helps develop body awareness and language development is a variation of peek-a-boo. The parent covers her eyes and then uncovers them. Continue the game covering different parts of the face and body. The toddler will imitate the parent.

(This game helps reinforce where body parts are located.)

2-3 Years—Tell Me a Secret

Young toddlers often enjoy parents whispering in their ear and they listen intently. But it takes time for them to learn how to control their voice and whisper back. To practice, whisper simple instructions to the toddler such as "let's clap our hands." Do the activity and laugh, then repeat.

(Whispering teaches a toddler to modulate her voice and promotes sound awareness.)

Hands and Arms

0-3 Months—Take My Finger

The baby is held so she can see the parent's face. Put a finger in front of her face or, if she is very young, into her hand. An older baby may look and reach for your finger. A younger baby will grasp the finger because this is a natural reflex. Tell the baby how strong she is; praise her for grasping or reaching for your finger.

(Grasping and reaching for things helps develop very early eye-hand coordination and gives sensory feedback to help build paths in the brain related to vision.)

3-6 Months—Touch Mama's (Daddy's) Nose

A baby begins to control her hands between about three to six months. Hand movement is very interesting for her and she will often watch her hands move. Gently clap her hands or fists together for her and touch the parts of the parent's face as they are mentioned. If baby seems to enjoy it, continue.

Clap, clap, clap your hands
Clap your hands together.
Clap your hands on Mama's nose
Clap your hands together.
Continue with chin, eyes, mouth, cheek, forehead, hair.

(This activity helps develop eye-hand coordination, a sense of rhythm and small muscle control.)

3-6 Months—Changing Hands

Bring out three toys the baby can easily grasp and are equally interesting to him. Put one toy in one of his hands and let him hold it for awhile. Then hold out the second toy for him. He may reach for it with the same hand that holds the first toy or take it with his empty hand. If he reaches for it with the hand that holds a toy, gently open his fingers and move his hand over to his other hand and put those fingers around the toy. Once the first hand is empty, help him take the second toy in that hand. Let him hold one toy in each hand for a little while. Then offer a third toy. If he doesn't drop one of the two toys he has, gently release the fingers of one hand and let the toy fall. Then offer him the third toy.

(This teaches the baby to use both hands, to grasp and release and to pass things from one hand to the other. All these skills are needed for eye-hand coordination.)

3-6 Months—Grab It!

At about three or four months, a baby starts to reach out for things she sees. Before that, a baby may kick and wave her hands with excitement when she sees or hears a toy that interests her. To encourage her to reach and take things, shake a rattle or squeak another toy in front of the baby so she both sees it and hears the noise it makes. Praise and encourage her if she reaches for it.

(This develops eye-hand coordination, gives practice in listening to sounds, and develops a beginning sense of accomplishment.)

3-6 Months—Squeeze It!

Put cellophane or something that crinkles or squeaks in a baby sock and tie it shut. Let the baby squeeze it. Try bubble wrap, too. Be sure to take the toy away when the game is over, and do not leave the baby alone with this toy. It is not safe without supervision.

(Squeezing develops texture discrimination, teaches comparisons, fosters eye-hand coordination, and builds vocabulary.)

6-9 Months—Pat-A-Cake and Bye-Bye

As a baby's hand coordination and dexterity improve, he will be fascinated by clapping, playing patty cake, and waving bye-bye. Coax the baby by clapping and waving his hands until he can do it

himself. Begin the motions and encourage the baby to join you. Clap in time to music while singing to the baby.

(Putting together music, words and gestures helps develop vocabulary, a sense of rhythm, and fosters social skills.)

6-9 Months—PULL!

Put a strip of cloth or a piece of yarn into the baby's hand. Then begin to gently tug on the other end. Explain what you are doing. Encourage him to "pull." Respond to any light pressure she makes, as she pulls on her end. Praise her for being strong. Pull gently and slowly, tugging just a little.

(Pulling develops a sense of cause and effect, strengthens hand and arm muscles, and gives practice in grasping and letting go again.)

6-12 Months—Home Made Pull Toy

Tie a wide ribbon around several rattles or other toys the baby likes and show her how to get the toys by pulling on the ribbon. Put the ribbon in her hand, as she moves her hand the toys will move and make noise. Help her pull the toys toward her and praise her for catching them.

(These toys help develop a sense of cause and effect as well as sound discrimination. They also help build self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment.)

Feet and Legs

0-3 Months—Kicky Kicky

The parent smiles when singing this song, and gently kicks baby's feet for him. If he seems to like the game, do it several times. Stop if he seems unhappy or stiffens his legs. Sing the words to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Praise the baby if he continues to kick his feet after the song stops. Sing for him again if he continues to kick.

Kick, kick, kick your feet,
Kick them up and down.
Kicky, kicky, kicky feet,
Kicking all around.

(This exercise strengthens the large muscles in the baby's legs and helps him feel how he moves in space. His movement gives his brain feedback and helps him make connections about movement and his body.)

3-6 Months—Hi Footsie!

Face a mirror with a baby and say, "Who is that? That's baby. Hi baby." Then say, "Where is your footsie? Here's your footsie. Hi footsie." Gently shake his foot as you say "hi." Continue to shake his hands, legs, and arms asking where each is and saying "hi" to each part as it moves in the mirror.

(Short sentences and pausing after a few words helps a baby sort out the sounds of language and helps a baby learn to talk.)

0-3 Months—Baby Knee Bends

As the parent smiles at the baby, gently and slowly bend the baby's knees and bring her feet up to her body and then straighten her legs out again. If she seems unhappy or stiffens her legs, stop

(Strong leg and thigh muscles will help a baby learn to crawl.)

3-6 Months—Uppy Up and Downy Down

The parent gently lifts one of baby's legs up and then down. Repeat. Then raise each arm. If he enjoys the game continue stop if he doesn't like it. Talk with the baby as he lies on his back. Gently push one leg and then the other up toward the body and then down again. Finally, raise one arm to the side of the baby's head, and very gently stretch out the leg on the opposite side of the body.

(Exercising large muscles helps the brain make pathways for large muscle movement, such as crawling. Stimulating bilateral parts of the baby's body helps develop a sense for both sides, which is also needed for crawling and walking.)

3-6 Months—Kick the Cookie Sheet

Hold a foil pie pan, jelly roll pan, or a regular cookie sheet by the baby's feet. Move her legs for her so that her feet kick the pan. Encourage her to kick the pan on her own. Talk about the texture and sound when her feet touch the pan.

(This kicking exercise helps develop body awareness. It strengthens the leg muscles needed for crawling and walking. This activity also allows for the exploration of texture and sound. Repeating movement strengthens the neural circuits that control movement.)

3-6 Months—Push Your Little Feet

Lay the baby on her tummy. The parent puts his hands behind her feet. Often touching the baby's feet will make her try to push away from them. The parent gently pushes her forward a little. Continue if she seems to like the game.

(This helps prepare a baby for crawling because she has to push with her feet to crawl. It helps develop small and large muscles.)

9-12 Months—1, 2, 3 KICK!

The parent stands with her hand on the back of a chair and says "1, 2, 3 kick!" The parent kicks a leg forward on the word "kick." Repeat several times. Put a chair up for the baby to use and ask her to try it. Count and kick together and praise her for her efforts. (Exercising the large muscles in the legs helps develop muscle tone.)

9-15 Months—Sticky Feet

Cut a piece of contact paper to fit a carpet sample. Use duct tape to secure it to the back of the carpet with the sticky side up. Let the child walk barefoot on the contact paper and feel it sticking to her feet. Talk about what is happening and how it feels. Stop if she isn't enjoying the game. An alternative might be to tape contact paper sticky side up on a piece of cardboard and let the child put different objects on it and pull them off again.

(This activity promotes sensory exploration and vocabulary development.)

9-15 Months—Walking (or Crawling) On Air

Put bubble wrap or other air packing materials down on the floor and hold the child's hand as he walks across the packaging. Talk about the texture and the sound as he walks. If he is interested, let him squeeze the packaging with his hands. However, do not leave the baby with these materials because they are dangerous without adult supervision. As soon as the game is finished, throw the packaging away or put it someplace where the baby will not accidentally find it by himself. Another texture to try is a paper road map.

(Walking and crawling on new surfaces provides sensory exploration and promotes vocabulary development.)

Whole Body Awareness and Baby's Body in Space

0-3 Months—Blowing on Baby

Hold baby so he can see the parent, say "Here are your fingers" and blow gently on them. Then kiss his fingers. Continue to blow on different body parts, naming and kissing each one. This helps make baby aware of his different body parts.

(Gentle stimulation of a baby's senses and interacting with a caring parent are important to intellectual and emotional development.)

0-3 Months—Rocking and Rolling

Many babies seem to like to be rolled and rocked on their stomachs. It seems to sooth some babies when they are gently rolled back and forth on a large rolled up towel or partially inflated beach ball. The baby should be gently, but securely held at the waist while being rocked. The baby's head should be turned to the side. The gentle pressure on the tummy may help babies who have gas or colic.

(Helps develop a sense of balance and helps strengthen the neck and upper body muscles.)

0-3 Months—Baby Sit Ups

A new baby's head is very large in comparison to his body and his neck muscles are too weak to hold up his head. To help strengthen the neck muscles, lay the baby down on a blanket on his back. Grasp the blanket edges near or just above his head. The parent keeps his forearms and elbows close to either side of the baby's body. Gently lift the blanket up and then lower it again. The parent talks and smiles at the baby as the baby is lifted and lowered, which helps strengthen his eye muscles too. Stop if he turns away or seems uncomfortable.

(The head and neck muscles begin to develop after the baby has strengthened his eye and mouth muscles. The shoulders and arms are next. The development continues down the baby's back to the hips, thighs, and calves. All of this muscle development has to happen before a baby can roll over, creep, pull herself to a standing position, or take a step.)

3-6 Months—Roll Over

Babies begin to learn to roll themselves over at about five or six months. To help the baby practice, lay her on a blanket or towel. Lift one side of the blanket to help her roll from tummy to back or back to tummy. The parent may have to help get her arms out of the way as she starts to roll. Sing the following "rolling" song to the tune of "Have You Ever Seen a Lassie" as the baby rolls back and forth.

When baby (insert baby's name) rolls over,
Rolls over, rolls over,
When baby rolls over,
How happy she is.

She rolls this way, and that way,
And this way, and that way.
When baby rolls over,
How happy she is.

(The ability to use both sides of the body is necessary for almost all movement. This activity helps develop a sense of balance, bilateral coordination, and large muscle control.)

3-6 Months—Tap Me Here, Tap Me There

Gently tap the baby on each body part, and then help him tap that part of the parent's face. If he likes the game, continue; stop if he starts to fuss or turns his head to the side to try to avoid the game.

(Touching body parts helps baby learn about his body.)

3-6 Months—Look Around You

Put the baby on her stomach facing a safety mirror. She will lift her head to look at herself in the mirror. This helps develop upper-body strength. It strengthens the muscles in the neck, shoulders, and back, which are used for sitting and crawling. The baby still cannot recognize herself, but will enjoy looking at the face in the mirror and is good visual stimulation. Safety mirrors should be used.

(Mirror play helps develop neck and back muscles and provides visual stimulation.)

3-6 Months—Where's My Baby?

The parent lies on his back and puts the baby on his chest. As the parent says this rhyme, he lifts the baby slowly and gently up in the air, and then lowers her to his chest again. The parent smiles when the baby looks into his face, and acts happily surprised to see her. Repeat several times if she seems to enjoy the game; stop if she doesn't like it.

Where's my baby?

There she is. (Lift baby so she looks into parent's face.)

Up, up, up she goes. (Lift baby up into the air.)
Where's my baby?
There she is. (Lower her so she is again looking into the parent's face.)
Down, down, down she comes.
There she is.

(This activity helps strengthen the baby's neck and back muscles and develops her balance. Both are needed for crawling.)

6-9 Months—Bounce

The parent sits on a chair and crosses her legs at the ankles. The baby sits on the parent's feet with his back to the parent's legs. Hold the baby by his hands as he is gently bounced on the feet. On the last line, the parent holds her legs out straight for a little while and then lowers him. Sing this song to the tune of "Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush" as the baby bounces. Repeat the bouncing if the baby seems to like the game.

This is the way we bounce, bounce, bounce.
Bounce, bounce, bounce.
This is the way we bounce up and down,
When we want to play. WHEEEEE!

(This game helps develop balance and bonding. Loving care by an adult is needed for a baby to develop healthy emotions and trust. If a baby is in a stressful environment, the brain is washed in hormones that eat away at the neural pathways and connections in the baby's brain. A baby who has good loving interactions with an adult develops the parts of the brain that help her calm herself when she gets upset.)

6-9 Months—Gonna Eat You Up!

Babies love to have Mom or Dad pretend to nibble on them. The parent can pretend to nibble on the body parts named in various rhymes and smack lips or pretend to chew. Stop if the baby doesn't like the game and try it again some other day.

(Games like this help develop language skills long before the baby can actually talk. Some provide naming practice of body parts and for food items.)

6-9 Months—Tick Tock

A baby's balance can be improved by holding the baby in the air and swinging her gently from side to side like a pendulum on a clock. The parent can make "tick tock" sounds or recite the "Hickory Dickory Dock" nursery rhyme.

(This activity develops bilateral body awareness, and it helps develop balance and a sense of rhythm. It also offers practice with listening skills.)

6-9 Months—Up You Go

To help develop lower body strength and large muscles, lay the baby on her back with her legs facing the parent. Hold her hands and raise her to a sitting position. From there, help her stand up. Lay the baby down again and start over. Tell the baby what is happening.

(The baby learns vocabulary as the parent talks about what is happening, and the leg and back muscles are strengthened.)

6-9 Months—The Baby Climbed Up The Mountain

Stack pillows cushions on the floor and put a favorite toy on the top. The baby will be encouraged to climb up and over the pile to get the toy. Sing "The Baby Climbed up the Mountain" to the tune of "The Bear Went Over the Mountain." Don't make the mountain too high.

(Climbing is an extension of crawling and adds a little excitement and challenge to regular crawling on the floor. It can help build self confidence and develop a sense of balance.)

9-12 Months—Baby Soccer

“Baby soccer” is a game where the parent picks the baby up under his arms and swings his legs back and forth to help him “kick” a soft ball. A third person can roll a medium-sized, light-weight ball toward the baby. The parent swings the baby so that his toes or legs “kick” the ball. The interaction with the two other players helps develop social skills.

(Gently swinging the baby’s legs helps strengthen stomach and leg muscles and helps make the baby aware of his body in space.)

9-12 Months—Hold My Hand

Although a baby may not be walking independently at nine months, she can walk if a parent holds her hands. Help the baby walk barefoot on safe, but uneven surfaces and over and around objects. The baby will move her foot to avoid objects and place them on the same surface as her other foot. Although a baby should not be left alone with bubble wrap, it is a fun texture to walk on as long as a parent is supervising.

(This activity develops a sense of balance, strengthens large muscles especially in the lower body, and practices eye-foot coordination.)

9-18 Months—Pushing and Pulling

Babies need encouragement to take a step after they learn to pull themselves up to their feet. They need time to strengthen their leg and back muscles before they can walk. One way to give babies practice is to let them stand and hold onto something like a laundry basket or a sturdy wheeled toy. When the baby has a good grip, the parent slowly pulls the basket or toy as she takes a step forward. The baby may enjoy pushing the basket or toy as the parent pulls it. Often older toddlers love to push their own stroller.

(Gentle pushing and pulling exercises help develop balance and large muscle coordination as well as strengthening the back, leg, and joints.)

12-18 Months—Barefoot

Walking barefoot helps a toddler use her toes to help keep her balance, which doesn’t work when she is wearing shoes. Walking barefoot on surfaces with different textures such as grass, a cool sidewalk, mud, and in water helps a toddler with body awareness, stimulates her senses, and helps her practice tactile discrimination. Describe the different surfaces the toddler is walking on to increase her vocabulary.

(Research at the University of Chicago indicates that babies who had mothers who talked to them frequently had a vocabulary at twenty months of about 130 more words than babies whose mothers talked less often to them. At age two, the difference doubled. Babies do not learn vocabulary by watching television. They learn by interacting with a loving adult.)

12-15 Months—Jump Baby Jump!

Wrap an old phone book in duct tape or cover it with contact paper to make it less slippery. Put the book on the floor and let the baby crawl up and over it. Let an older child stand on the book and hold his hand as he jumps off the book to the floor. Encourage him to jump and praise him when he does.

(Develops coordination, strengthens large muscles in the legs, builds self-confidence and courage.)

18 Months-3 Years—Horsie

Parents can begin a game of “horsie” with a toddler bouncing the child on the parent’s knees or legs. While gently bouncing the child, recite a nursery rhyme or sing a bouncing song. As the child gets older and has good balance, the parent can give the child a “ride” on the parent’s back as the parent crawls on hands and knees.

(This bouncing game helps develop a sense of balance and spatial awareness.)

2-5 Years—Balancing

Hold the toddler's hand while he walks on a low ledge or curb. A toddler may like walking along a two-by-four that is flat on the ground or elevated slightly. A variation on this activity is to put down colored sheets of construction paper and help the toddler step from one to another. Vary the distance so some steps are small and others require a "giant" step.

(Balancing offers practice with balance and eye-foot coordination as well as helping develop spatial awareness.)

2 ½ -5 years—Jumping

Jumping is a milestone for toddlers. At first, the toddler may need the parent to help by holding his hands. Small jumps from one surface to another are good at this age, perhaps from one step to the floor or from the bottom of the slide to the ground. Jumping increases bilateral coordination because it requires working muscles on both sides of the body. This coordination of both sides of the body is important to roll or kick a ball.

(Jumping helps develop a sense of rhythm, balance, eye-foot coordination, and large muscle control.)

BEDTIME

Suggested Bedtime Books

+ indicates a CCBC Choices book

- +Ada, Alma, Flor. 2003 *¡Pío Peep: Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes!* RAYO. 0-688-16019-0.
- +Bailey, Debbie. 2001. *Buenas Noches/Good Night*. Annick Press. 1-55037-7108. Board Book.
- Bang, Molly. 1998. *Ten, Nine, Eight*. Tupelo. 0-6881-4901-4. Board Book.
*Spanish version: *Diez, Nueve, Ocho*. 1987. Mulberry. 0-6881-5468-9. Paperback.
- +Banks, Kate. 2002. *Close Your Eyes*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. 0-374-31382-2.
- Brown, Margaret Wise. 1991. *Good Night, Moon*. HarperFestival. 0-694-00361-1. Board Book. Big Book also available.
*Spanish Version: *Buenas Noches, Luna*. 1995. HarperCollins. 0-060-26214-1.
- +Burningham, John. 2001 *Hushabye*. Knopf. 0-3758-1414-0.
- Cooney, Barbara. 1987. *Torillitas Para Mama*. Henry Holt. 0-8050-0285-5. Paperback.
- De Paola, Tomie. 1997, originally published 1985. *Tomie's Little Mother Goose*. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 0-399-23154-4. Board Book.
- +Eilenberg, Max. 2000. *Cowboy Kid*. Candlewick Press. 0-7636-1058-5.
- +Engel, Diana. 1999. *Circle Song*. Marshall Cavendish. 0-7614-5040-8.
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- Masurel, Claire. 1994. *Good Night!* Chronicle. 0-8118-2461-6. Board Book.
- Oxenbury, Helen. 1999. *Say Goodnight*. Little Simon. 0-140-13997-4. Board Book.
- Peek, Merele. 1981. *Roll Over: A Counting Song*. Clarion. 0-395-98037-2. Board Book.
- Shulman, Dee. 2000. *A Perfect Cuddle*. Scholastic. 0-439-12914-1. Board Book.
- +Thomas, Joyce Carol. 2000. *Hush Songs: African American Lullabies*. Sun/Hyperion. 0-7868-0562-5.
- Weiss, Nikki. 1989. *Where Does the Brown Bear Go?* Greenwillow. 0-688-07862-1.
- Wells, Rosemary. 1998. *Max's Bedtime*. Dial. 0-8037-2267-2. Board Book.
- +Wilson, Karma. 2002. *Bear Snores On*. Margaret K. McElderry. 0-689-83187-0.
- +Yolen, Jane. 2000. *How Do Dinosaurs Say Goodnight?* Blue Sky Press/Scholastic. 0-5903-1681-8.
- +Zolotow, Chartotte. 2001. *Sleepy Book*. HarperCollins. 0-060-27873-0.

Suggested Recorded Music

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996.. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Baby's Nap," "Rock-A-Bye, Baby," "Rock-A My Doll," "German Cradle Song," "Winkum Winkum," "Hush Little Dolly," "Sleep Baby Sleep," "Mother Goose Lullaby," "Hush-A Bye Baby," "Hush Now, My Baby," "Birdie's Cradle," "Hush, Little Baby," "Sleep Baby Sleep," "Slumber Song," "Night Is Near," "Hush-A-Bye, Baby Bye," "Star Bright, Star Light," and "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDL. Cassette with words. See "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See “Don’t Wash My Blanket,” “Goodnight Story Time,” and “Lovey and Me.”
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See “Brush Your Teeth.”

Suggested Props for a Bedtime Story Time

- Receiving blankets or other small, light blankets
- Baby doll with pajamas
- Baby-safe teddy bears, dolls, pacifiers, or other “lovies”

Extended Program Ideas for Bedtime

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

There are props available for this story, and each prop can be put out for the children, or flannel pieces can be put on the board as the story is told.

Backyard Bedtime by Susan Hill

If stuffed animals are available for the characters in the story, they can be used to tell the story as each is introduced.

Group Game—Rock-A-Bye Baby

The fingerplay and song section that follows includes instructions for playing a rocking game with toddlers that involves having the parent swing the child between the parent’s legs.

Art Suggestion—The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe

Using a pre-cut pattern for a shoe, help the toddlers glue on the children who lived in the shoe.

Suggested Bedtime Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

“Rock-A-Bye Baby”

Rock-a-bye baby,

(Infants—Parent rocks baby in arms back and forth and front to back.)

In the tree top.

(Toddlers—Parent holds toddler in the air and rocks back and forth. For a more active rock, the parent can stand, hold the child around the chest and swing her between the parent’s legs..)

When the wind blows,

(Infants—Parent blows on baby’s face.)

(Toddlers—Parent blows on child’s hair and neck.)

The cradle will rock.

When the bough breaks,

The cradle will fall.

(Infants—Parent lowers baby.)

And down will come baby,

(Toddlers—Parent lowers the child to the floor.)

Cradle and all.

Librarian plays the music for the song and models with a doll. The children may like rocking a stuffed animal or baby doll as the parents and librarian sing for them.

“Go to Sleep Toesies”

Sing to tune of “Frère Jacques”

Go to sleep toesies,

(Infants—Parent massages body part and kisses it.)

Go to sleep toesies.

(Toddlers—Parent tickles each body part and tickles or kisses it)

I love you, I love you.

Can you say good night?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent yawns, pats mouth, and stretches.)

Can you say good night?

Say good night!

Continue with:

Go to sleep fingers.

Go to sleep belly button.

Go to sleep nosie.

“Wee Willie Winkie”

Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town

(Infants—Parent lays baby on back and “runs” the baby’s legs gently.)

(Toddlers—Child sits on parent’s lap and parent moves the child’s legs in a running motion.)

Upstairs, downstairs in his night gown.

Rapping at the windows.

(Infants—Parent gently knocks on baby’s forehead.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child exchange gentle knocks on the foreheads.)

Crying through the lock,

“Are the children in their beds?”

(Infants and Toddlers —Parent whispers last two lines in child’s ear.)

For it’s now eight o’clock.”

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up four fingers on each side.)

“Diddle, Diddle Dumpling”

Diddle, diddle dumpling, my son John.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently bounces child on the adult’s lap.)

Went to sleep with his trousers on.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently shakes baby’s pant legs.)

One shoe off and one shoe on.

(Infants—Parent taps one of the child’s feet or shoes and then the other.)

(Toddlers—Parent takes off one of the child’s shoes.)

Diddle, diddle dumpling, my son John.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent bounces child and gives child a hug.)

“The Man in the Moon”

The man in the moon,

(Infants —Parent draws a finger around the child’s face to trace the shape of the moon.)

Looked out of the moon,

(Toddlers—Parent and child point at sky.)

Looked out of the moon and said,

“It’s time, I think, for all good children

(Infants—Parent whispers last two lines.)

To think about going to bed.”

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to lay head in hands and pretend to sleep.)

“The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe”

There was an old woman

(Infants—Parent holds up one of baby’s feet.)

Who lived in a shoe.

(Toddlers—Parent and child stand and put one foot forward, toes up, heel touching floor.)

She had so many children,

(Infants—Parent opens baby’s arms wide.)

She didn’t know what to do.

(Toddlers—Parent and child look puzzled and spread hands apart to show “big.”)

So she gave them all broth

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to feed child.)

And a big piece of bread,

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s arms out to the sides to show “big”.)

Kissed them all soundly.

(Toddlers—Parent stretches child’s arms out to the sides.)

(Infants—Parent kisses baby, pulls light blanket over the baby’s face, and then slowly removes it.)

And tucked them in bed.

(Toddlers—Parent kisses and wraps child in a blanket, or covers child’s head and gives child a hug.)

“Tommy Thumbs”

Tommy Thumbs up and

(Infants—Parent holds baby on lap and dances the baby’s thumbs up, down, and then in a circle.)

Tommy Thumbs down.

(Toddlers—Parents model the actions for the child. Thumbs point up and then down, then dance in a circle.)

Tommy Thumbs dancing

All around the town.

Dance ‘em on your shoulders.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent dances the child’s thumbs to his shoulders, head and knees, then covers the baby’s hands and gently squeezes them.)

Dance ‘em on your head.

Dance ‘em on your knees, and

Tuck them into bed.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to grasp the thumb on one hand with the fingers on the other hand, to put the thumb “to bed.”)

“Frère Jacques/Are You Sleeping”

Replace the name “John” with the names of children in the group – replace “brother” with “sister” for the girls.

Are you sleeping? Are you sleeping,

(Infants—Parent holds baby so they can look into each other’s eyes. Ask if baby is sleeping.)

Brother John, Brother John?

(Toddlers—Cheek is laid onto folded hands with eyes closed to imitate sleeping.)

Morning bells are ringing.

(Infants—Parents rock the baby back and forth like a bell.)

Morning bells are ringing.

(Toddlers—Parents lift child under arms, and “ring” the child back and forth like a bell.)

Ding, dong, ding!

Ding, dong, ding!

Words in French:

Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques

Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous?

Sonnez les matines,

Sonnez les matines,

Ding, dang, dong!

Ding, dang, dong!

“If You’re Sleepy and You Know It”

Use melody from “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”

If you’re sleepy and you know it,

(Infants—Parents gently stretch arms over baby’s head)

Stretch your arms.

If you’re sleepy and you know it,

(Toddlers—Parent and child stretch their arms up and out at sides while yawning.)

Stretch your arms.

If you’re sleepy and you know it,

Then you really want to show it,

If you’re sleepy and you know it,

Stretch your arms.

Replace “stretch your arms” with:

(Infants—Parent does each action for baby.)

Yawn real big.

(Toddlers—Parent models each action for child.)

Give yourself a hug.

Throw a kiss.

Shut your eyes.

Start to snore.

Say “good night!”

At the end of the song the librarian can pretend to be sleeping or say, “WAKE UP!”

“Hush Little Baby”

Hush, little baby, don't say a word.
Papa's gonna buy you a mockingbird.
If that mocking bird don't sing,
Papa's gonna buy you a diamond ring.
If that diamond ring turns brass,
Papa's gonna buy you a looking glass.
If that looking glass gets broke,
Papa's gonna buy you a billy goat.
If that billy goat don't pull,
Papa's gonna buy you a cart and bull.
If that cart and bull turn over,
Papa's gonna buy you a dog named
Rover.
And if that dog named Rover won't bark,
Papa's gonna buy you a horse and cart.
And if that horse and cart fall down,
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

(Infants—Parent rocks baby throughout song.)
(Toddlers—Parent flaps arms like wings.)
(Infants—Parent strokes baby's fingers.)
(Toddlers—Parent pretends to slip a ring on child's finger.)
(Toddlers—Parent pretends to hold up a hand mirror.)
(Infants—Parent gently shakes baby's chin.)
(Toddlers—Parent pretends to pull on a beard.)
(Infants and Toddlers—Parent puts up fingers as horns.)
(Infants—Parent rolls baby over.)
(Toddlers—Parent gently flips child head over heels in the air or helps him make a somersault.)
(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pants like a dog.)
(Toddlers—Parent pretends to hold reins of horse cart.)
(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs and kisses child.)
(Infants and Toddlers—Parent kisses and hugs baby.)

“Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”

Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder what you are.
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle little star.
How I wonder what you are.

(Infants—With baby on her back, parent rocks her gently from side to side.)
(Toddlers—Child sits on parent's lap as parent rocks from side to side.)
(Infant—Parent lifts baby overhead and sways.)
(Toddler—Parent helps child point overhead.)
(Toddler—Parent helps child outline a diamond in the air.)
(Infants—Parent lowers baby and cuddles.)
(Toddlers—Parent cuddles child.)

“Before I Jump into My Bed”

Before I jump into bed at night,

(Infants—Parent “jumps” baby.)
(Toddlers—Parent and child jump together.)

Before I dim the light,

(Toddlers—Parent models turning off light switch.)

I put my shoes together,
So they can talk at night.

(Infants—Parent taps baby's feet together.)
(Toddlers—Parent models placing shoes and feet side to side.)

I'm sure they would be lonesome

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes a sad face.)

If I tossed them here and there,

(Toddlers—Parent and child pretend to throw things over their shoulders.)

So I put them close together,

(Infants—Parent taps baby's feet together again.)

For they're a friendly pair.

(Toddlers—Parent and child put their feet and shoes together again.)

"Come to the Window"

Come to the window,

(Infants—Parent carries baby to a window.)

My baby, with me,

(Toddlers—Parent motions for child to "come," then points to the sky.)

And look at the stars

That shine on the sea!

There are two little stars

(Infants—Parent kisses baby's eyes.)

That play bo-peep.

With two little fish

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up two fingers.)

Far down in the deep.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a "fish" with hands and swims them downward.)

And two little frogs

(Toddlers—Parent demonstrates how to hop forward on two feet.)

Cry "Neap, neap, neap,"

I see a dear baby

Who should be asleep.

(Infants—Parent kisses baby's eyelids.)

(Toddlers—Parent sweeps child off her feet, cradles and kisses her.)

"Star Light, Star Bright"

Star light, star bright,

(Infants—Parent holds baby over head and sways him.)

First star I see tonight,

(Toddlers—Parent and child point to sky.)

I wish I may, I wish I might,

(Toddlers—Parent shuts eyes and pretends to be thinking.)

Have the wish, I wish tonight

(Infants—Parent lowers baby and hugs him.)

(Toddlers—Parent whispers the wish to the child.)

“El Coqui”	“Coqui, the Little Frog” (la vee'-ya)	
	<i>In Puerto Rico the sound one small frog makes has become the name of the frog.</i>	
My coqui' little frog, how I love you.	El coqui' el coqui, a mí me encanta, (el co-key', el co-key' ah mee may en-can'-tah)	(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wraps child in a blanket.)
For your songs give me comfort and peace.	Es tan lindo el contar del coqui'. (ace tahn leen-do' el con-tar' del co-key')	(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles and rocks child.)
Every night I can go to sleep happy,	Por las noches al ir a acostarme, (poor las no'-chays ahl ear ah ah-coas-tar'-may)	(Infants—Parent yawns and continues to sing and rock baby.)
When I hear lullabies from coqui'.	Me adormece cantado así. (me ador-may'-say can-ta'-do ah-see')	(Toddlers—Parent and child yawn and pretend to sleep.)
Coquí, coquí, coquí, qui', qui', qui'. (sing twice)	Coquí, coquí, coquí, qui', qui', qui'. (co-key' co-key' co-key' key, key key)	(Toddlers—Parent and child sing or say this line together.)

The music for this song can be found in De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1994.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Food—“Hey Diddle Diddle”

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Bedtime

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate: it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-3 Months—Sound Tracking

A new baby sleeps quite a bit, but there are brief periods of time when the baby may enjoy simple interactions with the parent. Even a new baby usually recognizes the voice of her mother. When the baby is on her back in a crib, the mother can stand on one side just out of sight and talk to the baby. The baby is likely to turn her head in that direction. The mother can step into sight and kiss the baby when she turns her head. The mother can then try again from the other side of the crib.

(Opportunities to practice voice recognition help create connections in the baby's brain and “hard wire,” or reinforce those that involve recognition of the mother's voice.)

0-3 Months—Line ‘Em Up!

Babies like to look at new things. One way to keep the view from the crib interesting is to tie a cord or ribbon across the bars of the crib and use clothespins or binder clips to hold toys and objects in place. The objects might include pictures, rattles, toys, and even clothes. Point to the objects, talk about them, and make them bounce or jingle. These objects can be changed to keep the baby interested in looking at them. Always remove the cord or ribbon when the play time is over, and never leave a baby unattended in a crib with a cord or ribbon.

(These toys may encourage a baby to try to reach out and touch them. They promote visual and spatial awareness.)

0-3 Months—Blanket Sit Ups

Lay the baby on a blanket and grasp the blanket near his head. Slowly raise the baby to an almost sitting position, and then lower him again as you talk to him and smile at him.

(A baby's head is large in comparison with the rest of his body. This exercise helps strengthen the upper body muscles.)

0-6 Months—Baby Hammock

Use a blanket to make a hammock. Two adults can gently sway the baby in the hammock by holding on firmly to the four corners of the blanket. The baby can also be lifted slowly up and down.

(This activity helps the baby develop a beginning sense of balance. It fosters social development and trust.)

0-9 Months—Crib Mobiles and Other Musical Crib Toys

Research shows that babies are very aware of music at even three months of age. If a baby associates music with touching a mobile, they will remember the song when they hear it even seven days later and reach out to touch whatever toy or mobile made the song when they first heard it. Even young babies quickly learn to kick their leg to make a mobile move if a soft ribbon is gently tied to the baby's ankle and then to the mobile. Never leave a baby alone with anything tied to him or tied in the crib with the baby. Babies may learn to fall asleep to the music from a soft animal toy or music box.

(Music helps develop listening skills and a sense of rhythm. Music helps children understand the rhythm of language.)

0-5 years Bedtime Routine

Establishing a bedtime routine is very important for a baby and young child. It can help avoid struggles to get the child settled for the night. It can also help comfort a child who wakes up during the night and get them back to sleep quickly. Bedtime should involve a quieting activity and a set routine preparing the child to go to sleep. It is a good time to start teaching a child to put their dirty clothes in a clothes hamper, brush their teeth before they go to bed, and other routines that will be important as the mature.

Some children like the parent to rub and pat their backs, rock them, sing or play soft music. All of these help to calm and quiet a child. The child may have a favorite toy or blanket that comforts them that they like to have near them when they sleep. It is not unusual for a young child to suck their thumb or fingers at bedtime, or twist and twirl a finger in their hair, or rock from side to side as they try to fall asleep. Many parents use bedtime as the ideal time to read to their children. When the child learns to read, the child and parent can continue this routine by taking turns reading to each other. Other people who care for the child should be familiar with the routine so that the familiarity of the routine makes him feel more secure.

(Establishing a routine at bedtime helps create a strong bond between the baby and parent. The routine helps the child become calm and relax so they can fall asleep more easily. It helps them learn sequence, prediction, and anticipation. It gives the baby or child an important sense of security and trust.)

3-6 Months—Roll Over

Around the age of five or six months, most babies learn to roll over. To help teach a baby to roll from back to side or stomach, lay the baby on her back on a soft blanket. Gently and slowly lift one side of the blanket until she rolls onto her side. Then help her move her arms out of the way to roll completely onto her stomach. Explain what is happening and praise the baby's efforts. The parent may want to sing the song "There Were Ten in the Bed" while playing this game because the refrain is "So they all rolled over and one fell out."

(This game helps a baby develop the sense of balance needed to roll over independently. It also helps with bilateral coordination and large muscle development.)

3-6 Months—Just Lookin' Around

Babies should sleep on their backs, but need tummy time to play, too. Babies like to look around their world, but may tire easily because their upper body muscles are not developed, and they cannot hold themselves up for very long. One way to help a baby look around is to roll a blanket or towel and put it under the baby's chest and arms. The baby can then lean on this roll and look around longer.

(Positioning a baby on a rolled towel helps strengthen the upper body muscles and encourages the baby to brace with his arms. This is a precursor to crawling.)

3-9 Months—Mirrors in the Crib

A fun activity for tummy time is to let a baby look at herself in a safety mirror. A baby may enjoy having a safe mirror in her crib. Although the baby does not recognize herself in the mirror, she will be interested in the baby she sees. Looking into a mirror may encourage a baby to hold her head up longer and try to brace herself with her hands and arms.

(Mirrors in a crib offer visual stimulation and may help develop upper body strength because babies have to lift and hold up their heads to look into the mirrors.)

6-9 Months—Push Off

At about six months many babies try to move forward on their stomachs. They can't actually balance on hands and knees yet, but they try to push forward by using their feet. To encourage the baby's efforts, roll a towel or blanket and put it behind the baby's feet when he is on his tummy on the floor. The parent should not push the baby forward, but rather let him brace his feet against the blanket and use it to push against. If he does move forward, the parent can reposition the blanket for him.

(Helping a baby push off helps develop large muscle skills and a sense of balance.)

6-12 Months—Peek-a-Boo

There are numerous suggestions on variations of peek-a-boo in the section on "Favorite Things" in this publication. All forms of peek-a-boo games help form connections in a baby's brain. The game strengthens some connections that are already there and helps make the brain's "wiring" more complex. Many of these connections will remain for the rest of the child's life.

(Peek-a-boo games allow the baby to observe changes, and anticipate what will happen next. They help a baby develop a sense of "object permanence;" i.e., that an object exists even if it is out of sight, and teaches a baby to interact with other people.)

12-18 Months—Do You Want a Ride?

Babies may enjoy sitting or laying on a blanket and being pulled by a parent or care giver. The parent can sing or make up a story about where the child is going as the blanket is pulled along.

(The child has to work at keeping upright so this helps develop a sense of balance and fosters the bonding between child and parent or care giver.)

12-18 Months—Pillow Mountain

Many babies are walking or trying to walk at one year. For those who can walk, changing the walking surface can be a challenge. Bed and sofa pillows or blankets can be used to add dimension to the walking area. A child may enjoy climbing up and over a low "mountain" of pillows. The parent or care giver should stand near to offer assistance as needed. Often the child just needs to hold the adult's hand.

(A child must work to keep her balance. This climbing helps strengthen the large muscles and promotes a sense of courage and self confidence.)

2-5 Years—Blanket Tents

A blanket over a card table or hung over a cord makes a perfect indoor tent for young children. They enjoy climbing in and out and, as they get older, this shelter can become part of their imaginary play.

(Special places help a child look in a new way at their environment. They stimulate curiosity and imagination. They may also give children a sense of shelter where they can withdraw and be quiet for awhile.)

BUBBLES AND BATHS

Suggested Bubble and Baths Books

+ indicates CCBC Choice book

Appelt, Kathi. 2001. *Bubbles, Bubbles*. HarperFestival. 0-694-01458-3.

Capucilli, Alyssa Satin. 1999. *Bathtime for Biscuit*. HarperCollins. 0-06-027938-9.

Cowley, Joy 1999, originally published in 1980. *Mrs. Wishy-Washy*. Wright Group. 0-399-23391-1. Board Book.

+Hest, Amy. 2002. *Baby Duck and the Cozy Blanket*. Candlewick. 0-7636-1582-X. Board Book, Touch and Feel.

Hill, Eric. 2000. *Spot Goes Splash*. Grosset & Dunlap. 0-448-42091-0. Board Book. Waterproof “tub” book version, 0-399-21068-7.

+Hubbell, Patricia. 2001. *Sea, Sand, Me!* HarperCollins. 0-688-17378-0.

+Oxenbury, Helen. 1999, originally published in 1987. *Tickle, Tickle*. Little Simon. 0-02-769020-2. Board Book.

Roth, Carol. 2002. *Ten Dirty Pigs/Ten Clean Pigs An Upside-Down, Turn-Around, Bathtime Counting Book*. North-South. 0-735-81089-3.

Splish, Splash: Baby’s World-Touch and Explore. 2002. Dorling Kindersley. 0-789-48829-9. Board Book, Touch and feel.

VanLaan, Nancy 2003. *Scrubba Dub*. Atheneum. 0-689-84459-X. Board Book.

Weeks, Sarah. 2000. *Splish, Splash!* HarperCollins. 0-064-44282-9.

Wells, Rosemary. 1998, originally published in 1980. *Max’s Bath*. Dial. 0-8037-2266-4. Board Book.

Suggested Recorded Music for Bubble and Baths

Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD, and booklet with words. See “Splashing in the Bath with My Little Rubber Duckie” and “This Is the Way We Take a Bath.”

Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo And Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music, B00000I6YJ. CD with words. See “Boogie Woogie Wash Rag Blues.”

Raffi. 1989. *Raffi in Concert*. Troubadour Records. B000003HS. Cassette with words. See “Bathtime” and “Baby Belunga.”

Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See “Brush Your Teeth.”

Sesame Street. 1995. *Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. Sony Wonder. 1-57330-513-8. Cassette with words. See “Rubber Duckie” and “Put Down the Duckie.”

Sesame Street. 1995. *Splish Splash-Bathtime Fun*. Children’s Television Network. B00000HXSD. CD with words. All the songs are about baths and water.

Suggested Props for a Bubbles and Bath Story Time

- Bubble solution and wands for each parent and child pair.
- Washcloths and towels for each parent and child pair—ask the parents to bring these.
- Rubber Duckie—the librarian will need one, but it would be better if each parent also brought a squeaky toy for their child.
- Baby Doll—the librarian will need one, but it would be better if each parent also brought one for their child.
- If water play is going to be included, a large pan of water will be needed—perhaps a water table can be borrowed for the day. A suggested list of items that can be used for water play is included.

General Water Play Suggestions

If a water table or pan of water is available, toddlers can simply play just with the water. Suggestions on toys and objects to use with the water are included below. This is a great outside activity. Specific water play learning activities are included below for various age groups.

small rocks	toy boats	toy dishes	bath books
Washcloths	baby shampoo	towels	bubble bath soap
bar of soap	bath brush	sponges	washable baby dolls
rubber duckie	bath toys	shower cap	clean paint brush
squirt toys	ice cubes	bath puppets/mitts	watering can
funnel	spoons	plastic cups	colander
Balls	plastic bottles	turkey baster	wading pool
toy alligator shark, fish, or other animals	Plastic measuring cups, and spoons	baby bathtub or pan of water	water bucket or other container
plastic food boxes with holes poked to make sprinklers	collection of items with some that float and others that sink	doll clothes to wash and hang on a line	water hose and spray nozzle

Water play and bathing can help calm an infant or toddler who is tired, cranky, or over-stimulated. Water often helps a child relax and slow down. It can stimulate a young child who is very quiet or passive. Exploration with objects in water provides sensual stimulation for infants and toddlers and improves eye-hand coordination. It encourages infants to reach and stretch. Squeezing helps toddlers strengthen their hand muscles. Helping a baby exercise small muscles helps develop the part of the brain that controls coordination and muscle movement. The beginning principles of math and physics are explored as water is poured, measured, and overflows containers and as a child observes objects sinking and floating. Additional information on the value of water play can be found in the section on muscle development in the first part of this publication.

Bubble Play Accessories

Individual bottles of bubbles with wands and accessories to make big bubbles	Large bottle of bubble solution and multiple Wands
Homemade bubble solution	Paper cups to share the solution
Bubble maker machine	Food coloring to tint bubble solution
Different kinds of bubble blowing toys, but avoid bubble pipes	Fan to blow bubbles around and allow children to feel the sensation of air blowing

Count bubbles as they are blown, and the number of bubbles toddlers pop which helps develop eye tracking, counting, eye-hand coordination, reaching, and stretching muscles.

When toddlers blow bubbles, they are developing mouth and lip muscle control needed for speech. Always be sure to blow bubbles away from the child's face to avoid getting soap into their eyes.

Bubble pipes are hard for young children to use because young children tend to suck rather than blow, and they may get soap into their mouths. Wash children's hands after they have played with bubbles so they don't touch their eyes or mouth and get soap in them.

Extended Program Ideas for Bubbles and Baths

Rubber Ducks

At registration time, ask parents to bring a rubber duck or other squeak toy to this program. Have a few extra on hand. Several of the books about baths in the bibliography feature a rubber duck. These stories can be combined with the rubber duck songs suggested in the bibliography or used with the fingerplays included below. Parents can squeak the rubber ducks in time to the music for their babies, and help toddlers squeak the ducks themselves. This activity might be good to do toward the end of the program because toddlers might not want to give up the ducks or stop squeaking them when the activity is over. Specific rubber duckie learning activities are included below for various age groups.

Washing Body Parts

At registration time, ask parents to bring a washcloth, towel, and a washable doll for this program. The activity involves touching and pretending to wash various parts of the baby or toddler with a washcloth, and then pretending to “dry” the child as he is hugged and cuddled in the towel. Parents can work with their toddlers to let the children wash the body parts of a doll. Combine stories about baths with the music suggested in the bibliography or with the songs and fingerplays suggested below. Specific bath learning activities are included in this section for various age groups.

Washing Animals or Dishes or Plastic Food

If the library has the space and interest, bring in a pan or bucket of water and let the toddlers give a bath to washable toy animals. Or, encourage the toddlers to help “wash the dishes” or wash plastic fruits and vegetables. Talk about color names and count when washing things. It might be possible to borrow a water table from a local preschool or kindergarten for the day. This is a fun activity to do outside on a nice day because the toddlers will get wet, and the water will splash out of the pan or water table.

Bubbles

A simple way to use bubbles is to have enough solution and “bubble wands” for each parent and child pair. Then blow the bubbles and let the children watch or try to catch them. Be sure to blow away from the child’s eyes. Toddlers may enjoy trying to blow the bubbles themselves. If a pan of water or water table is available, the toddlers can play with soap suds. Specific bubble learning activities are included below for various age groups.

Car Wash

This is an outside activity. At registration, tell parents to bring a riding toy to this program for their toddlers and to dress them in a swimsuit or clothes that can get wet. Have buckets of warm water with soapsuds ready, sponges and rags. If a hose is available, it adds to the fun. Have the toddlers ride their vehicle up to the washing stations, and let them play in the water as they “wash their cars.” Try to arrange for an extra riding toy or two so the children can trade or in case someone didn’t bring one. A local day care center might be able to loan the library a riding toy or two for the day. Dry the toys off with the rags.

Water Painting

This is another outside activity where children should be dressed in clothes that can get wet. Have a sponge-type paint brush and a bucket or plastic container of water for each toddler. Demonstrate how to “paint” the sidewalk with the paint brush dipped in water so children can see the dark places where they have applied the “paint.”

Group Game—Balls and Water

If it is possible to put plastic sheeting and newspapers down on the floor, this could be done indoors; but it is easier to do outdoors. Give toddlers balls to drop or toss into buckets or large pans of water. Tossing balls into water teaches release and throwing movements. The splash provides great incentive and reinforcement as well as a lesson in cause and effect.

Group Game—Chasing Bubbles

Adults can blow bubbles for the toddlers to chase. An electric bubble machine makes enough bubbles for everyone to enjoy.

Art Suggestion—Bubble Art

Mix water, dish detergent, and a few drops of food coloring or tempera paint into a large bowl. Put straw in a bowl and blow on the bubbles until a bubble mound forms over the bowl. Place a piece of construction paper over bubbles. As the bubbles pop they will create a bubble print.

Suggested Bubbles and Bath Fingerplays

“My Duck Says Quack”

Sing this song to the tune of “The Wheels on the Bus”

My little rubber duck says	<i>(Infants—Parent squeaks the rubber duckie through all the quacks.)</i>
Quack, quack, quack,	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child squeak rubber duckie in rhythm.)</i>
Quack, quack, quack, Quack, quack, quack.	
My little rubber duck says Quack, quack, quack.	
Whenever he takes a bath.	
My little rubber duck goes	<i>(Infants—Parent makes splashing motions with hands on baby’s tummy.)</i>
Splash, splash, splash,	<i>(Toddlers—Parent swims the rubber duck in a splashing motion.)</i>
Splash, splash, splash, Splash, splash, splash.	
My little rubber duck goes Splash, splash, splash.	
Whenever he takes a bath.	

Squeak toys help develop listening skills, a sense of rhythm, practice with cause and effect, anticipation, and help master the concepts of stop and go. Young babies practice eye tracking skills and toddlers improve their eye-hand coordination.

“This is the Way We Take a Bath”

Sing to tune of “Mulberry Bush”

This is the way we take a bath.	<i>(Infants—Parent gently moves the baby’s legs in time to music).</i>
Take a bath, take a bath.	<i>(Toddlers—Parent rocks child back and forth.)</i>
Splish! Splish! Splash!	
This is the way we wash our face.	<i>(Infants—Parent gently massages body parts or touches with a soft washcloth.)</i>
Wash our face, wash our face.	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child imitate the action and helps “wash” each body part.)</i>
This is the way we wash our face	
Splish! Splish! Splash!	

Continue song using other body parts—arms, hands, legs, toes, etc. This activity provides sensory stimulation and fosters bonding between the child and parent.

“Rub a Dub Dub”

Rub a dub dub, three men in a tub
And who do you think they be?

*(Infants—Parent recites poem while bathing baby.)
(Toddlers—Parent can recite poem while bathing child or can help the child put up three fingers, one at a time.)*

The butcher, the baker,
The candlestick maker.
And all of them gone to sea.

“Give Baby a Scrub”

Rub-a-dub-dub
Give the baby a scrub
With soap and water
In a nice clean tub.

*(Infants—Parent gently rubs baby all over.)
(Toddlers—Pretend to wash child all over.)*

Gentle touching stimulates your baby’s or toddler’s brain activity and boosts the immune system.

“After a Bath”

After a bath I try, try, try

To rub myself dry, dry, dry

Hands to dry, fingers and toes
Two wet legs and a shiny nose
Just think how much less time I’d take
If I were a dog and could

Shake, shake shake.

*(Infant—Parent touches baby with soft towel as each part is named.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child mimic drying actions for each body part.)*

*(Infants—Parent gently rocks baby and wiggles as if shaking water off.)
(Toddlers—Parent lifts child, under the arms off the floor and gently sways the child from side to side as if shaking off water.)*

Touching and naming body parts helps develop vocabulary as well as good body awareness.

“If Baby Blew a Bubble”

If baby blew a bubble
What would happen, would you say?

Would the baby’s bubble burst?

Or would the bubble blow away?

*(Infant—Parent blows on baby’s cheeks.)
(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to puff up cheeks and blow.)
(Infants—Parent gently taps fingers on baby’s forehead.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child tap their own chin and make a “thinking” face.)
(Infants—Parent blows on baby’s cheeks.)
(Toddlers—Parent again models blowing for child.)*

This activity helps children focus on the facial position needed for blowing. Sucking is a natural reflex; learning to blow takes practice. Many letter sounds are formed by blowing air out of the mouth, and this is good practice for later language development.

“Blowing Bubbles”

Blowing bubbles every day	<i>(Infants—Parent blows on baby.)</i>
I blow them all around	<i>(Toddlers—Parent models puffing up cheeks and blowing.)</i>
Then I watch them float up high	<i>(Infants—Parent moves baby’s arms over head.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child reach up and wiggle fingers.)</i>
Or pop upon the ground	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent claps with child on the word “pop.”)</i>

This rhyme and activity offers practice in blowing as well as helping children describe, in movement as well as words, what is happening to the bubbles.

“Bubbles”

Sing to tune of “Frère Jacques”

Blowing bubbles, blowing bubbles	<i>(Infants—Parent gently blows on baby’s face or hands.)</i>
Is such fun, is such fun	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child practice blowing in the air.)</i>
Blow them everywhere	
See them floating in the air	
Then they POP—POP—POP—POP	<i>(Infants—Parent claps baby’s hands four times.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child clap hands four times.)</i>

Singing helps children learn the rhythm of language, and helps them anticipate the end when they will clap a short rhythm. Blowing is a necessary element of language formation.

“Pimpón”

“Pimpón”

(pim-pone’)

This rhyme is from Jalisco, Mexico, but is familiar in other countries too. It is a song as well as an action rhyme, and there are other verses. Music can be found in Diez Deditos Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

Pimón is a nice puppet	Pimpón es un muñeco (pim-pone’ ace oon moon-yea’-koh)	<i>(Infants—Parent holds the baby’s hands in the air by the wrists and shakes them.)</i>
With hands made of paper	con manos de cartón (cone mah-no’-z day car’-tone)	<i>(Toddlers—Parent models waving hands in the air.)</i>
He likes to wash his face	Se lava la carita (say ya-va’ la car-ee’-ta)	<i>(Infants—Parent pretends to soap hands and rub baby’s face with soap.)</i>
With soap and lots of water.	con agua y con jabón (cone ag-wa’ ee cone sha-bone’)	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to rub soap on his hands and put it on his face.)</i>
Pimón fixes his hair	Se desenreda el pelo (say des-in-ra’-da el pay-yo’)	<i>(Infants—Parent pretends to comb or brush the baby’s hair.)</i>
With a comb or with a brush.	con peine de marfil. (cone pay’-knee day mar-fill’)	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to comb or brush his hair.)</i>
Although he doesn’t like it,	Y aunque no le gusta, (ee ah-oon’-kay no lay goo’-sta)	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent shakes head “no.”)</i>

He doesn't make a fuss.

No llora, ni hace así.
(no ya-oh'-ra knee ah'-say a-
see')

*(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles
and gives child a hug.)*

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Getting Dressed—"San Severino"

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Bubbles and Baths

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-3 Months—Taking a Bath

Bath time is an excellent time for bonding with parents. Water stimulates many senses, and the tactile sensation of touch helps the baby learn about her body. It is very important that the baby is handled gently and carefully.

(Helping a baby feel confident and secure in water at a young age will make it easier later for her to trust other people and to learn to swim. Research shows gentle touching stimulates a baby or toddler's brain activity and boosts the immune system which results in a healthier baby or toddler.)

0-3 Months—Watch the Bubble

Blow a bubble so the baby can see what the parent is doing and watch the bubble as it moves. Talk about what is happening. Babies do not have strong eye muscles and can follow an object with their eyes only for a short time. When a baby turns away, it is time to stop the game. That is how she tells adults she is tired.

Watching bubbles improves eye tracking and eye muscle control. It is especially important that babies learn to visually track or follow an object as it crosses in front of their nose from left to right, and as an object moves from above their eyes to their chin. This helps the eyes work together to focus.

(Eye tracking and strong eye muscles are very important to reading.)

3-6 Months—Big and Little Bubbles

Use different bubble blowing tools to make both large and small bubbles. Let the bubbles land on a soft carpet, towel, or in bath water, or catch one on the end of the bubble wand so they stay a little while to allow the baby to get a good look at them.

(Bubble play helps develop a sense of distance and depth perception. As the baby matures he will begin to reach out for an object he sees. Reaching and touching helps develop eye-hand coordination. He also notices that when he touches a bubble, it disappears; and he begins to understand cause and effect.)

6-9 Months—Kick the Water

Babies can be held barefoot over a pan of water so that they can dip their toes in and kick at the water. Most babies tend to like bath time. Six-to-nine-month-old babies can usually sit up by themselves. If they can't, there are baby tubs that help support them in a sitting position. Babies like to splash the water with their hands. To help her develop her leg muscles, a parent can gently kick her legs for her saying "kick, kick, kick," and praise her for trying to kick on her own. The splashing will also encourage her to keep kicking.

(This helps develop the large muscles in the arms and legs. This is often called "gross motor development." Kicking strengthens the leg, back, and stomach muscles.)

9-12 Months—Sponges and Shapes

As a baby gets older and his muscles develop, bath time can be a lot more fun because there is so much more he can do in the tub. Splashing remains great fun and, because his muscles are getting stronger and his coordination is getting better, the splashing can get the bathroom and the parent quite

wet. A baby at this age might enjoy different types of sponges and different shapes. Loofahs, sea sponges, bath mitts, and bath brushes can be introduced. He learns a lot by feeling the different textures and watching them float and sink.

(Bath time helps develop eye-hand coordination. The small muscles in the hands and fingers get stronger. This is often called “fine motor development.” Water toys provide tactile stimulation and teach basic scientific principles.)

9-15 Months—Drop It!

Put out a large metal or plastic bowl, or a clean plastic pail or bucket with water in it. Show the baby how to drop a plastic ball in the water and talk about the splash it makes. Encourage her to try it and praise her when the ball drops. The parent may have to help her open her fingers. Releasing an object is harder for babies than grasping. They need practice. Once a baby learns how to drop things or push them off her high chair tray to the floor, it seems to be all she wants to do. This can be frustrating for parents, but it actually is a milestone in terms of development. The repetition of dropping things reinforces neural pathways in the brain.

(Dropping things helps develop eye-hand coordination. It helps the baby internalize the concepts of cause and effect. It leads to a baby learning to throw things like a ball.)

9-15 Months—Ice Cube Play

Put some ice cubes in a plastic bowl, on a jelly sheet, or high chair tray and let the baby touch them. Tell him the name of these new things, and talk about how they feel cold. Other ways to play with ice cubes include putting a few in the sink when the baby is playing in the water or in the bathtub. Show him how to push the ice cubes down and watch them pop back up. Show the baby how to catch an ice cube with a cup. Explain what is happening as they melt and get smaller. Young children need to be supervised when playing with ice cubes because as they melt, they may become the right size to choke a toddler.

(This type of play encourages exploring temperatures, making comparisons, and observing cause and effect.)

12-18 Months—Squeak the Duckie

By about a year, a baby may be able to intentionally squeeze a rubber duck. The parent can act surprised which will encourage the baby to continue to squeak the toy.

(Squeaky toys stimulate the baby’s auditory or listening skills as well as her sense of rhythm, especially if a rubber duck is squeaked in time to a song. Squeaky toys teach cause and effect. Talking about what is happening helps develop language skills.)

18 Months-5 Years—Chase the Bubbles

When children walk with ease, they like to chase after bubbles and try to catch them before they pop. Talk about bubbles going up and down and being on something. Making and chasing bubbles remains a popular activity for children for many years.

(Chasing bubbles helps develop eye-hand coordination, stimulates the senses, develops a sense of body awareness, and helps strengthen large muscles. Talking about the bubbles promotes language development.)

18 Months-5 Years—Water the Flowers

When a child is walking well and can carry a small amount of water in a sprinkling can, they can help water outdoor plants and flowers. They may also enjoy holding a hose as water is sprayed from it.

(Children learn that all living things need to be cared for and the basic needs for them are the same as for people—food, water, light, and air. By helping care for plants and watching them grow young children learn important science lessons.)

2-5 Years—Pouring Water

A toddler learns about the principals of water if things like a colander, sieve, turkey baster, and measuring cups and spoons are added to the bathtub or pool. Pouring water remains a favorite activity for many years. She is learning about things being “full” or “empty” or “too much,” about “fast” and “slow.” His vocabulary develops along with his concept development. Water stimulates her senses. Her imagination can be stimulated by making “rain” with a colander. Sprinkling a child with water drops or misting her with a spray bottle may help get her ready to have water sprinkle her from the shower head.

(Basic science and math principles are explored when a child pours water. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. It improves eye-hand coordination and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another.)

2-5 Years—Give Dolly a Bath

From about age two, a child can practice imitating gentleness and care for other people by playing with dolls. Playing “Mommy” or “Daddy” with a washable doll helps him develop a sense of nurturing and caring for other people. It can teach him to be very gentle and careful around younger children and babies and to touch animals gently.

(Playing bath time helps a child think through the sequence of taking a bath and reinforces safety issues in the bathtub. It helps develop social skills. Playing with and bathing a doll helps develop body awareness.)

2-5 Years—Wash the Dirty Pigs

One way to add interest to water play is to let a child wash plastic animals. Start a story about how the pigs got dirty, and their mother has to give them a bath. Encourage the child to give ideas for the story and to build on the basic concept as the child washes the pigs.

(Water play can calm an excited or tired child and stimulate a quiet, passive one. This activity gives the child a chance to practice a parental role, stimulates the imagination, and helps the child understand the sequence of a story. This is an important reading readiness skill.)

2-5 Years—Car Wash

Children love to help wash a car and can be given their own sponge or cloth and bucket to help. With a parent’s help, the child can direct water from a hose.

(Young children learn by imitating adults. They learn to take responsibility by helping parents with chores long before they can actually manage their own responsibilities around the house.)

2-5 Years—It Floats!

Bath time or any time the child is in a swimming pool or has a pan or sink of water is a good time to talk about and let the child experiment with objects that sink and float. The child’s plastic or sponge bath toys often float. Help the child experiment by putting objects on the boat and anticipate what will happen. Help the child classify the types of things that float and those that don’t. Encourage the child to predict if a given object will float.

(Basic science and math principles are explored when a child plays with water. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. It improves eye-hand coordination, expands vocabulary, and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another.)

2-5 Years—Mud Pies

Water enhances play in the sandbox or on the beach. Children can explore the outcome of mixing water with sand and exploring the texture.

(Combining water and sand allows a child to explore the effect different volumes of liquid have on solids. Wet sand and mud offer delightful opportunities to experience tactile stimulation and stimulate creativity as the child molds the sand and mud and engages in imaginary play.)

COLORS AND COUNTING

Suggested Colors and Counting Books

+ indicates CCBC Choices book

- Bang, Molly. 1983. *Diez, Nueve, Ocho*. Mulberry. 0-688-15468-9. Paperback.
- +Fleming, Denise. 1997, originally published 1992. *Count!* Henry Holt. 0-8050-5081-7. Board Book.
- Gerth, Melanie. 2001. *Ten Little Ladybugs*. Piggy Toes Press. 1-581-170912-4.
- Hoban, Tana. 1993. *Black on White*. Greenwillow. 0-688-119-190. Board Book.
- +Hoban, Tana. 1987. *Is It Red? Is It Yellow? Is It Blue? An Adventure in Color*. Greenwillow. 0-688-070-345.
- +Hoban, Tana. 1999. *Let's Count*. Greenwillow. 0-688-16008-5.
- Hoban, Tana. 1993. *White On Black*. Greenwillow. 0-688-1199-190. Board Book.
- +Jonas, Ann. 1989. *Color Dance*. Greenwillow. 0-688-059-902.
- Martin, Bill. 1996. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?* Holt. 0-805-0479-05-45. Board Book.
Spanish Version: *Oso Pardo, Oso Pardo, Que Ves Ahi?* Holt. 0-805-069-011.
- Miller, Margaret. 1999. *I Love Colors*. Little Simon. 0-689-82356-8. Board Book.
- +Mora, Pat. 2000. *Uno Dos Tres/One Two Three*. Houghton Mifflin. 0-395-67294-5. Paperback.
- Murphy, Chuck. 2001. *Counting*. Little, Brown. 0-689-84011-X. Board Book, with slide panels.
- Raffi. 1989. *Five Little Ducks-Raffi Songs to Read*. Crown. 0-517-80057-8. Board Book.
- +Suen, Anastasia. 2002. *Toddler Two/Dos Anos*. Lee and Low. 1-58430-054-X. Board Book.
- +Thong, Roseanne. 2001. *Red Is A Dragon A Book of Colors*. Chronicle. 0-8118-3177-9.

Suggested Recorded Music for Colors and Counting

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Two Little Eyes."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDLD. Cassette with words. See "One Two Buckle My Shoe."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi In Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "Five Little Ducks" and "De Colores."
- Raffi. 1982. *Raffi Rise and Shine*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HH. Cassette with words. See "Five Little Ducks" and "The Numbers Rumba."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See "Baa Baa Black Sheep" and "Five Little Frogs."
- Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites* 1995. Sony Wonder. B000002B8g. CD with words. See "Fuzzy and Blue (and Orange)" and "Being Green."

Extended Program Ideas for Colors and Counting

Count! by Denise Fleming, **Counting** by Chuck Murphy, or **Let's Count** by Tana Hoban

Use any of these titles to introduce the numbers 0-10.

Diez, Nueve, Ocho by Molly Bang or **Uno Dos Tres/One Two Three** by Pat Mora

Practice counting in Spanish using either of these two titles.

Toddler Two/Dos Anos by Anastasia Suen

Introduce the concept of two being a pair in this bilingual book with simple text.

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr.

Use the props or make flannel board pieces to tell this color story about the animals Brown Bear sees. Let each child hold one prop or flannel piece until it is needed in the story.

Color Dance by Ann Jonas

Introduce the children to the concept of dancing with streamers to explore colors.

Colored Viewers

Show children how to look through colored paddles, glasses with different colored lenses, or through colored acetate sheets which are often used on an overhead projector.

Sorting and Matching Colors

Gather a collection of objects that are the same except for color. Show one colored object to a child and give her a choice of two other objects to match to the first one. If she can do this easily, add more choices or have her sort several objects by color.

Counting

The most difficult counting concept for young children is that each number goes with one object. When a child tries to count three objects, she may count to ten. She may skip around when counting. To help a child develop the concept of “one-to-one correspondence,” have the child pick up each object and put it in a container as she counts. This slows down the counting process, helps her match one number with each object, and helps her establish a rhythm to her counting.

Fruit Basket Colors and Shapes

Put out an assortment of real or plastic fruit. Talk about the colors and shape of each. If snacks are part of the program, let the children taste some of the fruits. Often asking children to take “just a lick” will encourage the hesitant child to at least try the taste, even if they don’t want to chew and swallow the food involved. However, current nutritional philosophy is that children should be allowed to decide what they want to try in terms of new foods, and how much they want to eat.

Group Game—I Spy

Play a version of “I Spy.” Have the child touch or point to something that is the same color as that on a sheet of paper or other object that is shown. Have them find the color on themselves or on their parent or care giver.

Art Project—Count My Spots

Make the outline of a puppy, leopard, other animals with spots, or perhaps a shirt, and let toddlers put large adhesive colored dots inside the lines. The parent or care giver can take it home and use it to continue talking to the child about the colors and to count the dots.

Suggested Color and Counting Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

Adults can typically look at a group of up to five or six objects and guess the quantity without actually counting them. But after seven items, adults count each one before deciding quantity. The range for babies seems to be up to three items. So it is a good idea when working with math concepts with babies to use no more than three objects. Five may be right for toddlers, and older preschoolers often easily manage quantities up to ten or more.

“Point to Something Red”

Point to something red!

(Infants—Parent touches a color on the baby’s clothes, names and describes the color.)

If you find that color,

(Toddlers—Parent touches the colors on the child or on the card, and asks child the color.)

Raise your hands up high

(Infants—Parent raises baby’s arms over head and shakes them.)

And shake, shake, shake!

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise hands and shake them when they find the color.)

Continue with other colors.

The librarian can prepare card stock with each color or colored object and multiple cards with various colors on them. The librarian holds up a card and the toddlers try to find the matching color on their card, themselves, or something in the room.

“Baa Baa Black Sheep”

Baa baa black sheep, have you any wool?

Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full.

(Infants—Parent touches three of the baby’s fingers in turn when counting the bags.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up three fingers and holds the others down.)

One for my master, one for my dame,

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up one finger at a time as they count the bags.)

And one for the little boy who lives in the lane.

Baa baa black sheep, have you any wool?

Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up three fingers.)

Substitute different colors in the poem for black. Cut sheep from different colored pieces of construction paper. Hold one up at a time as the rhyme is repeated using that color. Change the word from boy to girl on different verse.

Give each child a paper bag and shake cotton balls out on the floor. Let the children pick them up one at a time and put them into the bag. The parent or care giver helps the child count as each is put into the sack. This helps develop a sense of “one-to-one correspondence.” Young children need to learn to match each count to one object.

“One, Two, Buckle My Shoe”

One, two, buckle my shoe.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps one of child’s shoes and then the other.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child up the correct number of fingers for each pair of numbers.)

Three, four, shut the door.

(Infants—Parent puts one hand over one of baby’s eyes and then over the other one.)

Five, six, pick up sticks.

(Infants—Parent bends and pushes baby’s legs toward body one at a time.)

Seven, eight, lay them straight.

(Infants—Parent straightens each of baby’s legs.)

Nine, ten, a big fat hen.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent cuddles child.)

“Hickory Dickory Dock”

Hickory dickory dock.

(Infants—Parent holds baby and gently sways side to side.)

(Toddlers—Parent holds the child under the arms and gently swings her in the air like a clock pendulum.)

A mouse ran up the clock.

(Infants—Parent runs a “mouse” up the baby’s tummy or arm.)

(Toddlers—Parent runs the “mouse” up the child’s back or neck.)

The clock struck one.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pauses.)

And down he run.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent runs the “mouse”

Hickory dickory dock.

down again.)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent swings child again.)

Tick Tock!

“Here’s a Ball”

Here’s a ball.

(Infants—Parent traces a small circle around the baby’s nose.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a small circle using the finger and thumb.)

And here’s a ball.

(Infants—Parent traces a bigger circle on the baby’s cheek.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a bigger circle by joining the thumbs and index fingers.)

A great big ball I see.

(Infants—Parent outlines the baby’s face.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a large circle over head by joining fingertips.)

Shall we count them? Let’s.

(Infants—Parent touches and counts three of the baby’s fingers.)

One, two, three!

(Toddlers—Parent helps child count as they make the same three circles together.)

“1,2,3 There’s a Bug on Me”

1,2,3 there’s a bug on me.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes fingers crawl up three steps on child’s tummy, arm, or back.)

Where did he go?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent shrugs shoulders, looks around, and looks puzzled not to see the bug.)

I don’t know.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parents shake head “no.”)

Parents can use a plastic bug or a sticker on their finger and then make the bug disappear. Librarian can use a bug puppet. Use caution if some of the children are afraid of bugs.

“Count the Spots”

Sing to the tune of Mary Had a Little Lamb

Count the spots on Ladybug

(Infants—Parent dances ladybug in front of baby’s face.)

Ladybug, Ladybug.

(Toddlers—Parent holds child’s index finger and touches each dot on the ladybug.)

Count the spots on Ladybug.

How many do you see?

Ladybug has ___ black spots,

(Infants—Parent gently pokes baby’s tummy as the spots are counted.)

___ black spots, ___ black spots.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child touch and count each spot on the ladybug.)

Ladybug has ___ black spots.

This is what I see.

Make as many felt ladybug shapes as there are children in the program. Cut out round black spots to add to the ladybugs. Typically five would be about the most to use with toddlers. Toddlers may like to hold their own ladybug. Have parents help the child add the correct number of dots to the ladybug. Librarian may want to use a ladybug puppet. Felt dots or stickers can be put right on the child for counting instead of on the felt ladybug.

“Here Is the Beehive”

Here is the beehive

(Infants—Parent makes a fist or closes fist around baby’s hand.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a fist.)

Where are the bees?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent looks puzzled at not finding bees and tries to peek inside child’s fist.)

Hidden away where nobody sees.

Here they come buzzing out of the hive.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes buzzing sound and points index finger to make a bee.)

One, two, three, four, five!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent uses index finger to buzz and tickle the child’s tummy five times or to buzz each of the child’s fingers one at a time while counting.)

The librarian can use flannel pieces and remove each bee from behind the hive as they are counted.

“One for the Money”

One for the money.

(Infants—Parent holds one of baby’s feet.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise one finger.)

Two for the show.

(Infants—Parent holds the baby’s other foot.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise two fingers.)

Three to get ready.

(Infants—Parent raises baby’s legs to kick.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise three fingers.)

And four to GO!

(Infants—Parent gently “runs” baby’s legs.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise four fingers and quickly zips one palm against the other to show someone is running away very fast.)

Toddlers enjoy using this as a running game after they try it as a fingerplay. The parents or care givers model getting into a running stance for each count and take the child’s hand and run. Or, the children can run on “GO” and the parents or care givers can chase them. The librarian can lower a flag on “GO” as a visual clue for the children to start running. The activity helps the young child understand the rules of a game and a sense of timing.

“One Little Baby”

One little baby rocking in a tree.

(Infants—Parent rocks infant from side to side.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up one index finger OR shows child how to cradle and rock one finger in the other hand.)

Two little babies splashing in the sea.

(Infants—Parent makes splashing motion with baby’s hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up two fingers OR makes splashing motions)

Three little babies crawling on the floor.

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s legs in a crawling

		<i>motion.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up three fingers OR crawls fingers up the child's back.)</i> <i>(Infants—Parent makes knocking motion with baby's hand.)</i>
Four little babies banging on the door.		<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up four fingers OR pretends to knock on child's head.)</i>
Five little babies playing hide and seek.		<i>(Infants—Parent puts hands over baby's face.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up five fingers OR puts hands over child's eyes.)</i>
Keep your eyes closed tight now		<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent opens hands on the word "peek.")</i>
Until I say "Peek."		

"The Butterfly"

"La Mariposa"

One, two, three, four, five.	Uno, dos, tres, (oo'-no, doe-z, trace,) cuatro, cinco. (qwa tro,' seen-ko')	<i>(Infants—Parent counts the fingers or toes on one of the baby's hands or feet.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up five fingers, one at a time.)</i>
Once I caught a butterfly alive.	Cogi' una (coe-gee' oo'-na) mariposa de un brinco. (mar-ee-poe'-sah day oon brin'-coe.)	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent catches and hugs child.)</i>
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten.	seis, siete, ocho, (say-z, see-ay'-tay, oh choh') nueve, diez. (new-ay'-vay, dee-ay'-z)	<i>(Infants—Parent counts the toes or fingers on the other hand or foot.)</i> <i>(Toddler—Parent helps child hold up all the fingers on one hand and then, as the numbers are counted, holds up each finger on the second hand.)</i>
Then I let him go again.	La solte' brincando (la soul-tay' brin-caun'-doe otra vez. (oh'-tra vase.)	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent catches child again and then releases her.)</i>

"Five Little Chickies" "Cinco Pollitos"

Five little chickies	Cinco pollitos (seen-ko' poe-yee'-toes)	<i>(Infants—Parent kisses each finger on one of the baby's hands.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up fingers on one hand.)</i>
Has my Aunt Tamba.	Tiene mi tía. (tea-en'-ay me tea'-a)	
One sings so pretty,	Uno le canta, (oo'no lay can-ta')	<i>(Infants—Parent gently shakes the baby's thumb and the pinkie fingers, then waves the remaining fingers.)</i>
One says "¡Caramba!"	Otro le pía. (oh-troe' lay pea-a') "¡Caramba!"	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child put down the thumb and index finger.)</i>

	(cah ram' ba)	
And the three others	Y tres le tocan (ee trayz lay toe'-cahn)	(<i>Toddlers—Parent helps child wave the remaining fingers.</i>)
Play a great samba!	La sinfonía. (la sin-phone-knee'-a)	

The music for this song can be found in Diez Deditos, Ten Little Fingers, and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Family, Friends, and Community—"How Many People Live at Your House?"
Farms—"Hickety Pickety, My Black Hen," "Little Boy Blue"

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Colors and Counting

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0 Months-Forever—Lullabies and Songs

At bedtime or anytime the infant or child is tired or restless, sing favorite lullabies to her as she is rocked. Two popular songs are "Rock-A-Bye Baby" and "Hush Little Baby," but any gentle song will work.

(Singing and rocking helps develop a bond between the parent and infant. Both the parent and child are soothed by rocking. The familiarity helps the baby make connections in her brain. The song and rocking helps a baby or child calm down and relax in preparation for bedtime or whenever the child is upset. People who care for the child, other than the parent, should be told the bedtime or calming routines. Research indicates that the human brain shares the same pathways for both math and music.)

0-3 Months—Rocking and Rolling

Many babies seem to like to be rocked gently back and forth. While supporting the baby's head, lay her on an inflated beach ball. The baby should be gently but securely held at the waist while being rocked. The baby's head should be turned to the side. When soothing the baby, continue a regular pattern. But during tummy time or play time, gently rock and say "back and forth" in a steady rhythm. Then suddenly pause and wait a few seconds before starting again. Say "stop" as the rocking stops. Then start again and stop at irregular intervals.

(The rocking helps develop a sense of balance and strengthens the neck and upper body muscles. By interrupting the regular rhythmic movement and adding a pause, the baby learns a very basic sense of tempo. The irregularity to the pauses creates a surprise for the baby and tends to keep the baby interested in the activity.)

0-6 Months—Crib Mobiles and Other Musical Toys

Research shows that babies are very aware of music at even three months of age. If a baby associates music with touching a mobile, they will remember the song when they hear it even seven days later and reach out to touch whatever toy or mobile made the song when they first heard it. At first babies prefer to look at black and white images but, after about eight to twelve weeks as their eyes begin to focus better, they prefer bright colors.

(Music helps develop listening skills and a sense of rhythm. Language depends not only on learning words but the rhythm of how they are pronounced. Music skills seem to be related to learning mathematical skills later in school.)

3-6 Months—Touch Me, Kiss Me

The parent gently taps or kisses the baby on a body part three times. The parent counts each touch or kiss. Repeat several times on different body parts. After about three or four times, switch to only two

kisses. Then go back to the regular pattern of three. If he likes the game, continue. Stop if he starts to fuss, turns his head to the side, or tries to avoid the game.

(Touching helps baby learn about his body. Although the baby is too young to actually learn how to count, even very young babies recognize differences in repeated patterns.)

3-9 Months—How Does It Feel?

Put out small pieces of different kinds of fabric such as cotton, fur, velvet, satin, netting, corduroy, and perhaps a feather. Gently brush the baby's skin with the softer textures. Hold out one piece at a time and, as the baby reaches for it, talk about how it feels.

(The contrasting fabrics give the baby a chance to explore texture. It helps the baby notice similarities and differences which a child must do before they learn to sort and classify things.)

3-9 Months—Tick Tock

Hold the baby around her chest and gently swing her back and forth from side to side and say "Tick, Tock" or recite "Hickory Dickory Dock." In a group with other babies, everyone stand in a circle so the babies can see each other swinging. Pause mid-swing and watch the baby's expression. The baby may be surprised when the closure of the final "Tock" is missing.

(Swinging helps develop a sense of balance and body awareness as well as a sense of steady rhythm. It also fosters listening skills. The pause allows the baby to think about what should come next. When it doesn't, the baby is likely to know something has changed. This is an excellent way to teach pattern anticipation. When children sing nursery thymes or play counting games, brain scans show sections of their brains glow with activity.)

6-9 Months—Kicking

Babies can be held barefoot over a pan of water, so they can dip their toes in and kick at the water. Babies may enjoy having the parent or care giver manipulate their legs and feet to kick a soft ball. Babies might also enjoy the noise they create when they kick against a string of bells or a cookie sheet. To help her develop her leg muscles, a parent can gently kick her legs for her saying, "kicky, kicky, KICK!" and praise her for trying to kick on her own. Vary the tempo of the words and add an extra "kicky" from time to time.

(This helps develop the large muscles in the arms and legs. This is often called "gross motor development." Kicking strengthens the leg, back, and stomach muscles. Changing tempo offers practice in pattern recognition.)

6-9 Months—Bouncing

The parent places the baby on the parent's feet facing away from the parent. The parent holds the baby by his hands as he is gently bounced. On the last line, the parent holds her legs out straight for a little while and then lowers the child. Use any bouncing song or rhyme as the baby bounces. Repeat the bouncing if the baby seems to like the game. Repeat the regular rhythm several times, and then switch by pausing after the first line. Exaggerate the count, then go back into the regular rhythm again. This may surprise the baby because what he anticipated did not happen. The baby may seem confused, but should smile with satisfaction again when the familiar ending is finally added.

(This game helps develop balance and bonding. Loving care by an adult is needed for a baby to develop healthy emotions and trust. Young babies can't actually count, but they do respond to repeated patterns and recognize when they change.)

6-18 Months—Clapping Games

As a baby's hand coordination improves, the baby has a great deal of interest in what his hands can do. He likes to reach and grab things. He enjoys a game of clapping. He learns that people like to say good-bye to him by waving, they respond with a smile when he waves at them.

He likes to have an adult help move his hands as the parent or care giver says the pat-a-cake rhyme until he masters the clapping part for himself. The "roll them and roll them" part takes longer for the baby

to learn, but he likes to have someone help him roll his hands. By varying the tempo in clapping games, the baby has a chance to notice differences and anticipate what comes next.

(Putting together music, words, and gestures helps develop vocabulary and a sense of rhythm and it fosters social skills. The variation in tempo allows the baby to practice anticipation skills and to notice the differences in rhythm.)

6-18 Months—Watch It!

Use a puppet or any toy the baby likes and hide it behind a chair, the footboard of a crib, or any barrier that has several open sides to begin a game of peek-a-boo. Make the toy pop up suddenly and disappear again several times in the same location. Talk to the baby and encourage him to watch for the toy just before it pops up. Cue the baby with the same sound just before it pops up. The parent can say, "Watch it now," or perhaps squeak the toy. When the baby looks at the location in anticipation of seeing the toy, make it appear in a new location. Laugh with the baby who may be startled or surprised with the change. Repeat that location several times and then go back to the original location. Rotate between the two locations and watch to see if the baby looks back and forth between the two spots. Then use a third location. Continue as long as the baby enjoys the game.

(This is a good visual tracking game but the change in location of where the baby sees the toy also helps the baby develop prediction skills.)

6-18 Months—Put It In

Wash out an empty gallon milk jug and put out some round-top clothes pins or other things that will fit through the hole, but not be dangerous for the baby. Show the baby how to drop one into the opening in the bottle. Encourage her to try to get them into the jug. It is better to start with straight shapes like clothes pins and a round hole. Later she may be ready to try to fit different shapes into specific holes made for them, but this is too hard at first. Shake the jug to make it rattle as the clothes pins go into it.

(Toys that require a child to fit one object into or through another help develop pre-math skills of graduated differences in size. These toys teach beginning problem solving skills and cause and effect. They also help develop the baby's eye-hand coordination.)

6-18 Months—Stacking Rings

Show the baby how to put a plastic ring around a central hole and take it off again. At first it will be easier for a baby to take the rings off, but as the baby's coordination improves he will be able to put the rings on himself. Later the baby will be able to put the rings on the pole in the correct order, largest to smallest. A homemade ring set can be made with a paper towel core and the rings from canning jars, or holes can be cut in small colorful paper plates.

(Stacking rings help with eye-hand coordination. It also develops pre-math skills of graduated differences in size and the order in which things come which is called "sequencing." These toys teach beginning problem-solving skills.)

6-18 Months—Pop-Up Toys

Toys that pop up suddenly in response to something the baby has manipulated keep babies interested for quite a long time. At first, the baby just likes watching as the parent manipulates the toy. Then, the baby may help push the toy back down after it pops up. Later, the baby will enjoy controlling the toy himself. Some toys that pop up suddenly, like a jack-in-the-box, may frighten babies at certain ages, but they gradually begin to enjoy the surprise. They learn to use the music as a clue to when the object will appear. If the toy is controlled manually, the parent can vary the tempo of the music or pause just before the toy is to pop up.

Make a homemade pop-up toy out of a paper cup and a straw. Cut a hole in the bottom of the cup and stick a straw into it. Draw a face on a circle of cardboard and tape it to the top of the straw. Move the straw up and down to make the face pop up and then disappear. Turn the straw to make the face turn from side to side. Vary the timing of when the face pops up.

(Toys that have something pop up when a child manipulates them in some way, teach cause and effect, prediction, and reward anticipation. They also help develop eye-hand coordination. They help the baby

develop a sense of “object permanence”— that the object still exists even if the baby can’t see it. Object permanence helps the baby overcome separation anxiety when a parent leaves. This type of toy helps develop self-esteem and a sense of mastery and power. By varying the tempo, the child learns to notice the difference in timing and practices anticipation and prediction skills.)

9-18 Months—Stop and Go Dancing

Babies love to have a parent hold them and dance with them. The type of music doesn’t really matter. However, the eardrums of both the baby and the parent can be damaged by loud music so play the music at a normal volume. To add a little surprise to the dance, the parent can stop suddenly then start again. When the parent stops, the baby has to catch her balance. Most babies enjoy these sudden starts and stops.

(Dancing promotes musical listening skills and a sense of body rhythm. It helps develop a sense of balance and promotes social skill development. Varying the tempo with sudden stops and starts allows the child to practice anticipation and prediction skills.)

18 Months-3 Years—Whoa Horsie

Parents can begin a game of “horsie” with a toddler bouncing the child on the parent’s knees or legs or while the child sits on the parent’s back. While gently bouncing the child, recite a bouncing rhyme. Start with a very regular beat, then vary the bouncing tempo and the number of bounces for each line of the rhyme.

(Bouncing games help develop a sense of balance and spatial awareness. Setting a regular tempo and repeating helps the child learn to anticipate the ending. As the child becomes familiar with the regular rhythm, change it. The child will notice the difference and will stay engaged in the game longer because of the variety.)

18 Months-5 Years—Build a House, Build a Town

By eighteen months a toddler enjoys sitting on the floor and playing with building blocks. Sponge and soft sculpture blocks are a good choice for a young child because if they tumble over they will not hurt the toddler. As the toddler matures and shows an interest in imaginary play, at about two years, suggest building a house. Adding people, animals, or vehicles to block play helps the child develop a sense of community. If the child enjoys the game, suggest adding houses for other people and other buildings in the community—a school, hospital, post office, or police station. Two-year-olds enjoy running cars, trucks, and other vehicles on a path or road, through box tunnels, and over block bridges.

Blocks provide numerous opportunities for children to internalize an understanding of shape, size, and form. They learn two short blocks are the same length and height as one long one. They explore how two triangles can be put together to form a square. They notice arches and bridges.

(Blocks encourage imaginative play and improve eye-hand coordination. Block play helps form the basis for later understanding of geometric shapes and principals, measurement, balance, and weights. Knocking down blocks provides a healthy outlet for aggression, and gives shy children a sense of power and control over the environment.)

18 Months-5 Years—Water Play

Toddlers learn about the principals of water if things like a colander, sieve, turkey baster, and measuring cups and spoons are added to the bathtub or pool. Pouring water remains a favorite activity as a child matures. He is learning about things being “full,” “empty,” or “too much” and about “fast” and “slow.” His vocabulary develops along with his concept development. Water stimulates his senses. More information on the value of water play is included in the previous section on muscle development.

(Basic science and math principles are explored when a child pours and plays with water. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. It improves eye-hand coordination, and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another. Helping care for plants and watching them grow teaches young children important science lessons.)

2-5 Years—Circle Songs and Games

At about age two, a child begins to understand that some games have rules. They enjoy playing with other children, but often do not know how to interact. A parent can teach a child the words and motions to familiar circle songs and games such as “Ring-Around-The-Rosy,” “The Farmer in the Dell,” “London Bridge,” “Mulberry Bush,” and “Pop Goes the Weasel.” The young child then understands what she should do when she joins other children playing a game she recognizes.

(Circle games and songs help a child learn songs to sing to themselves. Music is closely related to developing math skills. A child enjoys the social companionship of holding hands with other children or adults, and begins to develop an understanding of and appreciation for cooperative play. Many childhood games such as “Ring-Around-The-Rosy” involve timing which teach anticipation and prediction skills.)

2-5 Years—Ball Skills

Balls are good for babies of all ages. As the child matures, additional games with balls can be added that involve catching, tossing, and holding a ball. A child learns to catch before he learns to throw. At about two years, a child can sit and toss or roll a beach ball or other soft ball back and forth to another person. It is easier for a child to sit when learning to toss and catch because he doesn't have to worry about balance at the same time. All ball play with young children should be done gently and with soft balls that will not hurt if the child is hit in the face or head.

At about two and a half, when a child can toss a ball, variety can be added to ball play by putting out a bucket or tub of water or a small swimming pool. The child will enjoy the splash the ball makes when it lands in the water.

Typically children do not have the coordination to dribble a ball until they are about four years old, but there are always exceptions. Before a child can bounce a ball with one hand, he will need practice bouncing and catching a ball with both hands.

(Ball play at various ages helps develop eye-hand and eye-foot coordination and strengthens large muscles. Ball play helps develop control of reflexes, spatial awareness, and good timing. A good sense of body timing is extremely important as the beginning of internalized understanding of intervals. This is a key math concept. Ball play also promotes social interaction, appreciation for non-competitive games, and develops a beginning understanding of “game rules” and taking turns.)

2 ½ -5 years—Jumping

Jumping is a physical milestone for toddlers. The child progresses from jumping as the parent holds his hand to jumping independently from the bottom of a slide to the ground or off one step to the floor. As the child matures, the basic skills of jumping and hopping are used for hopscotch, jumping rope, skipping, and other more sophisticated movement.

(Jumping increases the bilateral coordination needed to roll or kick a ball and develops balance. It helps internalize a sense of intervals and timing which are needed to understand many math concepts.)

FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND COMMUNITY

Suggested Family, Friends, and Community Books

+ indicates a CCBC Choices book

- Alborough, Jez. 2002. *Hug*. Candlewick. 0-7636-1576-5. Board Book.
- +Anholt, Laurence. 2000. *Sophie and the New Baby*. Albert Whitman. 0-8075-7550-X.
- Ballard, Robin. 2001. *My Day, Your Day*. Greenwillow. 0-688-17796-4.
- +Banks, Kate. 2004. *Mama's Coming Home*. Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 0-374-34747-6.
- +Banks, Kate. 2000. *The Night Worker*. Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 0-374-35520-7.
- Brown, Marc. 1997. *Kiss Hello, Kiss Good-bye*. Random House. 0-679-86739-2. Board Book.
- Brown, Margaret Wise. 1991. *The Runaway Bunny*. HarperFestival. 0-061-07429-2. Board Book. Spanish Version: *El Conejito Andarin*. 0-0644-3390-0.
- Bynum, Janie. 2000. *Otis*. Harcourt. 0-1520-2153-1.
- Carlson, Nancy. 2001. *How About a Hug*. Viking. 0-670-03506-8.
- Christian, Cheryl. 1991. *Donde Esta el Bebé?* Star Bright Books. 1-887734-26-0.
- Flack, Marjorie. 1986. *Ask Mr. Bear*. Aladdin. 0-8085-3547-1.
- +Harris, Robie H. 2000. *Hi! New Baby*. Candlewick Press. 0-7636-0539-5.
- +Howard, Elizabeth Fitzgerald. 1999. *When Will Sarah Come?* Greenwillow. 0-688-16180-4.
- +Hutchins, Pat. 1993. *My Best Friend*. Greenwillow. 0-688-11485-7.
- Intrater, Roberta Grobel. 2002. *Hugs and Kisses*. Scholastic Cartwheel. 0-4394-2003-2.
- Jenkins, Emily. 2001. *Five Creatures*. Farrar, Straus and Grioux. 0-374-32341-0.
- Katz, Karen. 2003. *Counting Kisses: A Kiss and Read Book*. Simon. 0-6898-5658-X.
- McBratney, Sam. 1996. *Guess How Much I Love You?* Candlewick. 0-7636-0013-X. Board Book.
- McPhail, David. 2002, originally published in 1984. *Fix-It*. Dutton. 0-525-46849-8. Board Book.
- Melmed, Laura Krauss. 1998. *I Love You As Much*. Tupelo. 0-6881-5978-8. Board Book.
- Raffi and Sylvie Kantorovitz. 1990. *Wheels on the Bus*. (Raffi Songs to Read), Crown. 0-517-57645-7. Paperback.
- +Roe, Eileen. 1994. *Con Mi Hermano/With My Brother*. Aladdin Library. 0-689-71855-1. Paperback.
- +Russo, Marisabina. 2001. *Come Back, Hannah!* Greenwillow. 0-688-17383-7.
- +Steptoe, John. 1988. *Baby Says*. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. 0-688-07424-3.
- Tafari, Nancy. 2000. *I Love You, Little One*. Cartwheel. 0-4391-3746-2. Board Book.
- +Thomas, Shelby Moore. 2001. *A Baby's Coming to Your House!* Albert Whitman. 0-8075-0502-1.

Suggested Recorded Music for Families, Friends, and Community

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD with words. See "Little Brother's Lullaby," "The Family," "Dance to Your Daddy."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDLD. Cassette with words. See "Good-bye Song."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo And Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Mommy Comes Back," "Daddy Be a Horsie."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi In Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "All I Really Need," "The More We Get Together."
- Raffi 1982. *Rise and Shine*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-39-4. Cassette with words. See "Wheels on the Bus."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See "The More We Get Together," "The Sharing Song," and "Down by the Bay."
- Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. 1995. Sony Wonder. 1-573-30513-8. CD with words. See "The People in Your Neighborhood."

Suggested Props for Family, Friends, and Community Story Time

- People and family dolls, include multicultural dolls
- Vehicle for dolls to ride inside—cars, trucks, bus
- Soft building blocks

Extended Program Ideas for Family, Friends, and Community

One way to begin a play session or story time for a group of toddlers is to say a greeting rhyme, and offer each child a chance to touch a new person if they want to do so. Be sure to greet the children with enthusiasm and a big smile.

Young children learn through repetition. Starting a story program in the same way helps build connections in the brain. It also helps children feel familiar in the setting, know what is expected from them, and helps them anticipate the sequence of the program. This activity also helps children feel welcome in a group and part of a community of friends outside of the immediate family. An opening routine builds trust and encourages self confidence. An ending routine is also good, because it, too, helps firm up brain connections and allows young children to recognize the ending as a signal of transition.

Ask Mr. Bear by Marjorie Flack.

Have props for the story that correspond to the gifts the animals give the little boy for his mother—eggs from the chicken, milk from the cow, etc. At the end of the story have the parent give the child a big hug.

Donde Esta El Bebé? by Cheryl Christian

This book is easy enough for a non-Spanish speaking librarian to read in Spanish. The meaning of the story line is evident from the illustrations, and it doesn't really matter what language is used.

Hi! New Baby. by Robie Harris

Let each toddler hold a baby doll and pretend to rock it. Encourage them to be careful and gentle.

Kiss Hello, Kiss Good-bye by Marc Brown

Encourage the parents and toddlers to practice all kinds of kisses and hugs as the book is read. Practice throwing and catching kisses.

Wheels on the Bus by Raffi

Use the cassette and book together and sing about the people on the bus. Give each toddler a doll or animal to put on a toy bus. This helps young children develop a sense of "community."

Group Game—Baby London Bridge

Toddlers can play an abbreviated version of "London Bridge" if the parent walks with them under the bridge and when it is their turn to be "locked up."

Art Suggestion—Family Faces Books

Parents can bring photographs of family members and make photocopies or cut pictures of people from magazines. Put two pictures back to back in baggies to make a sandwich bag-type book. Bind the baggies together with tape.

Suggested Family, Friends, and Community Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

"Polly Put the Kettle On"

Polly put the kettle on,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parents sway with child as the song is sung.)

Polly put the kettle on,

Polly put the kettle on,

And we'll all have tea!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to be sipping a cup of tea and offers a sip to child.)

“Here’s a Cup”

Here’s a cup, and here’s a cup.

(Infants—Parent shakes each of baby’s thumbs in turn.)

(Toddlers—Parent holds handle of one cup and then the other.)

And here’s a pot of tea.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes a fist and puts out thumb for the spout.)

Pour a cup and pour a cup

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pours from one “spout” into both of the child’s fists.)

And have a cup with me!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent offers the child a “cup of tea.”)

“Jack and Jill”

Jack and Jill went up the hill,

(Infant—Parent slowly sways baby in the air as if walking up a hill.)

To fetch a pail of water.

(Toddlers—Parent walks fingers of both hands up the child’s back.)

Jack fell down and broke his crown.

(Infants—Parent lowers baby quickly and kisses his head.)

(Toddlers—Parent rubs child’s head as if it hurts.)

And Jill came tumbling after.

(Toddlers—Parent tumbles hands down the child’s back.)

“Mommy’s Special”

Use melody from “Where Is Thumbkin”

Mommy’s special.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sways with child on lap.)

Mommy’s special.

Yes she is! Yes she is!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs and kisses child.)

And she really loves me.

And she really loves me.

Yes she does! Yes she does!

Continue with Daddy, Grandma, and the child’s name.

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“I Love My Mommy”

Use melody from “Up on the House Top”

I love my mommy, yes siree!

(Infants—Parent rocks child in time to music.)

She is very go-od to me!

(Toddlers—Parent bounces child on parent’s knees.)

She makes me supper and yummy treats,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent rubs and tickles the

That's my mom and she's real neat.

child's tummy.)

(Infants—Parent puts the baby's hands on parent's face.)

Oh, oh, oh, who wouldn't know.

Oh, oh, oh, who wouldn't know.

I love my mommy and she loves me,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs and kisses child.)

That's the way it's supposed to be.

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“Daddy, Daddy, I Love You”

Use melody from “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”

Daddy, Daddy, I love you

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent holds child on lap and sways, in time to melody.)

Yes I do, yes I do.

(Infants—Parent smiles at baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child shake head “yes.”)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

I'm so glad that you are mine,

I love you all the time.

Daddy, Daddy, I love you.

Yes I do, yes I do.

(Infants—Parent smiles at baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child shake head “yes.”)

Insert other names in place of “Daddy.”

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“We're a Happy Family”

Use melody from “I'm a Little Teapot”

I love Mommy, she loves me.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent holds child on lap and helps child pat the parent's face.)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

We love Daddy, yes siree.

He loves us and so you see,

We're a happy family.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sways with child from side to side.)

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“Families”

Use melody from “One Little, Two Little”

Some families have fathers,

(Infants—Parent gently shakes baby's thumb.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up thumb.)

Some have mothers,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent repeats with pointer finger.)

Some have sisters,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent repeats with middle finger.)

Some have brothers.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent repeats with ring finger.)

In some houses,

(Infants—Parent forms roof over baby's head by touching finger tips together.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child form a roof by

touching finger tips together.)

There are others.

Every family's special.

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

Modified from Simply Super Story Times Programming Ideas for Ages 3-6 by Marie Castellano. Upstart, 2003, used by permission.

“My Family”

This is mama, kind and dear.

(Infant—Parent gently shakes the baby's thumb and each finger in turn.)

(Toddler—Parent helps child make a fist, hold up first the thumb then each finger in turn.)

This is papa, standing near.

This is brother, see how tall!

This is sister, not so tall.

This is baby, sweet and small.

These are the family one and all!

(Infants—Parent gently shakes all of baby's fingers.

Toddlers—Parent helps child wiggle all fingers.)

“How Many People Live At Your House?”

How many people live at your house?

(Infants—Parent touches one of the baby's fingers or toes as each is counted.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up one finger for each count.)

One, my mother,

Two my father,

Three my sister,

Four, my brother.

There's one more,

Now let me see—

Oh yes, of course, it must be me!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child poke their own tummy with their last finger.)

“Some Families”

Some families are large.

(Infants—Parent gently stretches baby's arms out to the sides and then brings them back.)

(Toddler—Parent helps child show “large” with her arms and hands.)

Some families are small.

(Infants—Parent brings baby's hands together until they are almost touching.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child use hands to show “small.”)

But I love **my** family

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gives child a big hug.)

Best of all!

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“The More We Get Together”

The more we get together, together, together; *(Infants—Parent holds baby on parent’s lap and opens and closes baby’s arms in time with rhyme.)*

The more we get together; *(Toddlers—Parent holds out child’s arms and then crosses them as the parent brings the child’s arms in toward his body.)*

The happier we’ll be! *(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles widely at child and hugs him.)*

Cause your friends are my friends. *(Toddlers—Parent points first to the child, then to parent, and then reverses.)*

And my friends are your friends.

The more we get together, *(Infants—Parent opens and closes baby’s arms as before.)*

(Toddlers—Parent holds out child’s arms and then crosses them as before.)

The happier we’ll be! *(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles widely at child and hugs him.)*

“Do It For Grandma”

Use melody from “Did You Ever See a Lassie”

Let’s clap our hands for Grandma, *(Infants—Parent gently claps baby’s hand together.)*

(Toddlers—Parents model clapping for child.)

For Grandma, for Grandma.

Let’s clap our hands for Grandma. *(Infants and Toddlers—Parents repeat as before.)*

Let’s clap our hands this way. *(Infants—Parent claps baby’s hands to the left and then to the right.)*

Clap this way and that way. *(Toddlers—Parent helps child lean and clap to left and then the right.)*

Clap this way and that way.

Let’s clap our hands for Grandma.

Let’s clap them this way.

Continue with:

Let’s wave bye-bye for Grandpa. *(Infants—Parent waves baby’s hand in bye-bye motion.)*

(Toddlers—Parent models waving for child.)

Let’s say coo and goo for Grandma. *(Infants—Parent says “coo” and “goo” to infant, and smiles and blows on baby.)*

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to be a baby, and puts finger in mouth and says “coo” and “goo.”)

From Simply Super Story Times Programing Ideas for Ages 3-6 by Marie Castellano. Upstart, 2003, used by permission.

“Wave Hello, Wave Good-bye”

Use the melody from “Are You Sleeping”

Wave hello to Daddy. *(Infants—Parent waves baby’s hand as song is sung.)*

Wave hello to Daddy.

(Toddlers—Parent encourages child to wave hello and good-bye.)

Wave, wave, wave.

Wave, wave, wave.

Continue with other names—Mama, Grandpa, etc., then change words to “wave good-bye” and “blow a kiss.”

“Baby London Bridge”

London Bridge is all broke down.

(Infants—Parent carries baby and walks between open bridge ends.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child walk between open bridge ends.)

All broke down, all broke down.

London Bridge is all broke down,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent repeats as before.)

My fair lady. (gentleman)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

London Bridge is all built up.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks between raised arms of the bridge.)

All built up, all built up.

London Bridge is all built up,

My fair lady (gentleman).

London Bridge is falling down.

(Infants—Parent stoops with baby, stands, and stoops again.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child stoop to the floor, stand, and repeat on the words “falling down.”)

Falling down, falling down,

London Bridge is falling down.

My fair lady (gentleman).

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

Create an arch for parents and children to walk under.

“Five Little Houses”

One little house, all alone it stood.

(Infants—Parent holds up one of the baby’s fingers.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up one finger.)

Then another one was built.

(Infants—Parent touches each of the other fingers in turn.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up another finger.)

There grows the neighborhood.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child clap hands.)

Repeat with three more fingers.

Five little houses all together stood.

(Infants—Parent holds up baby’s hand.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up all five fingers.)

On a beautiful street

In a happy neighborhood.

(Infants—Parent waves one of baby’s hands and

then the other.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child wave one hand at the other.)

From FingerTales by Joan Hilyer Phelps. Upstart, 2002, used by permission.

“Round and Round the Village”

Walk round and round the village.

(Infants—Parent slowly turns or walks in a circle while holding the baby.)

(Toddlers—Parents and children walk in a circle while holding hands,)

Walk round and round the village.

Walk round and round the village

As we have done before.

Continue with other verses:

Step in and out the circle—

(Infants—Parents take a step forward and back while holding baby.)

(Toddlers—Still in a circle and holding hands, parents and children move forward and then back again.)

Tiptoe round and round the village—

(Infants—Parent tiptoes with baby in arms.)

(Toddlers—Parents and children drop hands and tiptoe in a circle.)

If a parachute is available, toddlers can hold the edge and walk in a circle, step forward, and back, and finally tiptoe while holding the edges.

“The Village”

“La Villa”

(la vee'-ya)

This rhyme is chanted as a gentle tease when a child takes an empty chair. It is a traditional chant used by children in many countries where Spanish is spoken.

Move your feet.

El que se fué a la villa
(el kay say fway a la vee'-ya)

(Infants—Parent can say the rhyme as the baby is placed in a high chair or car seat.)

Lose your seat.

Perdió su silla
(pear-dee'-yo sue see-ya')

(Toddlers—Parent plays a game by getting up and letting the child take the parent's seat. Then the parent can pretend to take the child's seat.)

OR

Left my chair to go into
town

Lost my chair, I can't sit
down.

The music for this song can be found in De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1994.

“Good Morning”*Use melody from “Frère Jacques.”*

Good morning, good morning.

How are you?
How are you?

Very well, I thank you.

How about you?
How about you?**“Buenas Dias”**

(boo-way'-no-z dee'-ahz)

Buenas días, buenos días.
(boo-way'-no-z dee'-ahz)¿Cómo estás?
¿Cómo estás?
(koe'-moe ay-stas)Muy bien, gracias.
(moo-ee bee'-in,
gra-see'-ahs)¿Y usted? ¿Y usted?
(ee oo-sted', ee oo-sted')*(Infants—Parent shakes one of baby's hands gently to ask the question and the other to answer.)**(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up fingers on each hand, while facing each other. One wiggles to ask the question, then the other wiggles to answer.)**The music for this song can be found in De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1994.***“My Family”**

This tiny one is my little brother.

This one is my mother.

This tall one is my father.

This one is my sister.

And this little and pretty one

Is me!

“Mi Familia”

(me fam-ee-lee'-a)

Este chiquito es mí hermanito.
(ay'-stay chi-key'-toe ace me heir-man-ee'-toe)Esta es mí mamá.
(ay'-sta ace me mama)Este altito es mí papa'.
(ay'-stay all-tea'-toe ace me papa)Esta es mí hermana
(ay'-sta ace me heir-man-ee'-ta).Y éste(a) chiquito(a) y bonito(a)
(ee ay'-stay (ta) chi-key'-toe) (ta)
(ee boe-knee'-toe) (ta)Soy yo!
(soy yo)*(Infants—Parent gently squeezes each of the baby's fingers in turn starting with the thumb.)**(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a fist and then raises one finger up at a time starting with the thumb.)**(Infants—Parent smiles and taps baby's chest.)**(Toddlers—Parent helps child point to herself.)**Use éste for a boy, ésta for a girl. Use chiquito for a boy, chiquita for a girl. Use bonito for a boy, bonita for a girl.***“Knock, Knock”**

Knock, knock.

“Tan, Tan”Tan, tan
(tan, tan)*(Infants—Parent makes knocking motion with child's hand.)**(Toddlers—Parent helps child place*

Who's there?	¿Quién es? (key'-en ace)	<i>hands palm to palm and tap thumbs together.)</i> <i>(Infants—Parent looks puzzled.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child tap pointer fingers together.)</i>
It's me.	Soy yo (soy yo)	<i>(Infants—Parent points to self.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child tap middle fingers together.)</i>
Come in.	Voy a abrir. (voy a a-brear')	<i>(Infants—Parent smiles and makes a "come in" movement with hands.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child tap ring fingers together.)</i>
Hello, my friend.	Hola, amiguito (oh-la', a-me-gee'-to) OR Hola amiguita (oh-la', a-me-gee'-ta)	<i>(Infants—Parent waves one of baby's hands.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child wave the fingers on one hand to "talk" to the fingers on the other.)</i>
How are you?	¿Cómo estás? (koe'-moe ay-stas')	<i>(Infants—Parent waves baby's other hand.)</i> <i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child wave the fingers on opposite hand to "answer.")</i>

For Additional Related Fingerplays and Songs See

Family, Friends, and Community—"The More We Get Together"
 Favorite Things—"Ring-Around-the-Rosy"
 Music—"The Wheels on the Bus"

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Family, Friends, and Community

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0 Months-Forever—Sing Lullabies and Songs Together

At bedtime or anytime the infant or child is tired or restless, the parent can sing favorite lullabies as the baby is rocked. Two popular songs are "Rock-A-Bye Baby" and "Hush Little Baby" but any gentle song will work.

(Singing and rocking helps develop a bond between the parent and infant. It soothes both the parent and child. The repetition of a familiar song helps a baby or child anticipate bedtime. The familiarity helps the baby make connections in her brain. The singing and rocking helps a baby or child calm down and relax in preparation for bedtime or whenever the child is upset. It's good to tell other people who care for the child bedtime songs and routines. The routines help reassure the child.)

0 Months-Forever—Read Books with a Child

It is never too soon to start reading to babies; and there is never a time when a parent should stop reading to, or with, a child. At about three to six months, a baby takes an active interest in looking at the

pictures in a baby board book and turning pages. The baby may let the parent know she recognizes familiar objects in the world around her. It is fun to teach babies a hand sign for words and pictures they recognize but cannot say. Baby signs can help a baby communicate before she is able to speak. Often parents teach the baby to make a sound when they see pictures of a certain animal. (Children who enter school with hours of experience with books are usually farther ahead in many readiness skill areas than children who have not been read to very often. Experience with books is a key factor in a successful start in school.)

0-3 Months—Gazing

New babies need quiet time to just practice looking and focusing their eyes. New babies like to practice looking at a parent's face. When the baby is alert, find a quiet place. Turn off background noise because new infants are easily over-stimulated. The parent props the baby on the parent's knees and they gaze into each other's eyes. This helps the baby relax and is an excellent bonding activity that fosters healthy emotional and social development. It also helps develop visual and listening skills.

Softly say the baby's name, make faces at him, smile, raise eyebrows, model how to open and close the mouth, or how to stick out a tongue. The baby may watch intensely and may try to imitate the expressions. Even very young babies may stick out their tongue in imitation of a parent. If the baby turns away frequently or becomes restless, the baby is indicating it is time to stop. A baby needs to withdraw from intense bursts of interaction to allow his brain time to process what he has learned.

(Offers practice in focusing eyes and beginning muscle control. A baby develops her mouth and eye muscles before any others.)

0-6 Months—To Work, To Work

A parent cannot play with a baby every minute that the baby is awake. Both the baby and the parent need down time. A baby likes to stay close to the parent even if the parent is not directly interacting with her. The baby can be put in a front baby carrier or in an infant seat from which she can watch as the parent goes about daily chores. The parent can talk to the baby as the work goes along.

(A very young baby feels secure when he is kept near his parents. This helps develop trust. Trust is the key to developing good social and emotional growth. As the baby gets older, she may enjoy imitating what the parent is doing.)

0-18 Months—Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

Babies love to look at the human face. There are numerous games that can be played with mirrors. For a very young baby, hold a mirror up so the baby can see his own face or hold the baby up to look at a wall mirror. Point at the baby's reflection and say his name. A young baby will not recognize his own face; but as the baby gets a little older, he is likely to smile the moment he recognizes that familiar face he sees in a mirror. As the baby matures, he will begin to make faces at the baby in the mirror and delight in the imitation he sees. An infant safety mirror makes a good crib toy beginning at about three months old, or when the baby can hold his head up as he lies on his stomach. Mirror play helps the baby develop his sight as well as learn social and emotional skills.

(Looking into a mirror and at other human faces helps a baby explore the social nature of the human face and learn to recognize human expression of emotion. Eventually the mirror helps the baby gain a sense of self identity.)

3-6 Months—Here's Your Nose, There Are Your Eyes

Put the baby on his back so that he can see the parent's face. The parent touches first the baby's nose and then the parent's, saying "This is your nose. This is my nose." The parent continues to name and touch the baby's facial features and then the parent's. The parent should smile and respond to any interest or excitement the baby displays. Stop when the baby is tired.

(The tactile stimulation of this game helps the baby become more aware of his own face and body. It is the beginning of body part naming.)

3-18 Months—Family Book for Baby

Put photographs of people the baby knows into re-sealable baggies and tape the baggies together to form a book. Or, put the photos between plastic sheets in a small photo album. Let her page through the book. Encourage her to say the person's name or say "hi" to that person. If there is a concern about the baby hurting the photographs, make copies on a photocopier.

(Recognition of familiar people in photographs reinforces the bonds between the baby and the people who care most about her. This game helps develop page-turning skills and eye-hand coordination.)

6-12 Months—I'll be Right Back

Between six and nine months some babies become very fearful when they cannot see or be near their parents. This is an indication of normal intellectual and emotional development. Mobility helps the baby understand that people can move around, and this understanding leads them to fear that they will lose their parent or be left behind. The parent can talk to the baby as he moves away. The parent continues to talk as he steps around a corner or behind something, then steps back immediately before the baby becomes upset. If a baby does become upset, the parent should return, calmly pick up and comfort the baby, and reassure her that everything is fine. When the baby is calm, put her down again and use toys to distract him to get him involved again in playing.

(The recognition that an object or person exists even when it is out of sight, is called "object permanence." It is a milestone in normal infant intellectual development.)

6-15 Months—Face Magnets

Enlarge photos of family members, especially faces on a computer or photocopier. Glue the photos to cardboard and securely glue a magnet to the back of the photo. Put these photos low on a refrigerator so that the baby can see, touch, and manipulate the photos during play time. Or let the baby play with them on a cookie sheet. Name and talk about each one as he touches them.

(Recognition of familiar people in photographs reinforces the bonds between the baby and the people who care most about him. This activity also develops eye-hand coordination.)

6-15 Months—Computer Keys

Detach the keyboard from the computer and let the baby pat the keys. Or, give her an old keyboard. The keyboard is likely to click as she touches the keys.

(Playing with a keyboard allows a baby to imitate activities she sees other people doing, teaches cause and effect, and develops a familiarity with the tools used for writing and communication.)

6-18 Months—How Do You Do?

Many babies begin to develop "separation anxiety" and anxiety around strangers between six and nine months. To introduce a baby to new people, the parent holds him on her lap. Have a friend whom the baby does not know come in and sit next to the parent. The parent then says hello and shakes hands. Talk to the friend for a few minutes, and let the baby listen and watch. Then give the friend a toy to offer to the baby and introduce the friend to the baby. He may look at the toy, take it, or pull away from the stranger. Continue talking if the baby is afraid, and later have the friend offer a toy again. If he begins to like the new person, the adult can offer her hands to offer to take the baby. If the baby pulls back, becomes frightened or cries, comfort him and don't force him into the arms of the new person. Try again at different times.

(Gradually introducing babies to new people develops a sense of trust that will last a lifetime. It allows babies to become familiar with, and comfortable around, new people.)

6-18 Months—Clapping and Pat-A-Cake

As a baby's hand coordination improves, the baby has a great deal of interest in what his hands can do. He likes to reach and grab things. He enjoys a game of clapping. He learns that people like to say good-bye to him by waving, and that they respond with a smile when he waves at them. He likes to have an adult help move his hands as the parent or care giver says the pat-a-cake rhyme until he masters the

clapping part for himself. The “roll them and roll them” part takes longer for the baby to learn, but he likes to have someone help him roll his hands.

(Clapping helps develop eye-hand coordination. The pat-a-cake song helps build vocabulary. Since pat-a-cake is so popular with adults, the baby learns that he knows a game he can use to interact with most adults. He just has to get them started and most adults will start singing the song for him. This helps develop the child’s sense of control and confidence. He also learns how to initiate a social contact.)

6 Months-5 Years—Gonna Get You and Chase

As a baby learns to crawl away, she loves to have adults chase and catch her. The parent starts the game by smiling and saying “I’m gonna get you” and starts to crawl or walk toward the baby. The parent continues to say, “Gonna get you,” as he gets closer. When the parent catches the baby, he can pick her up and give her a kiss, a little tickle, or blow on her tummy. Keep the game very gentle and don’t startle or frighten the baby. Then put the baby down and start the game over. Often the baby will squeal with delight when caught.

(Part of the fun for the baby is the understanding that comes from repeating a familiar game. The baby learns that she can initiate a game by crawling or running away and knows what the parent will do when the parent catches her.)

9 Months -5 Years—Telephone Play

Let the baby play with a toy telephone or handle a sturdy real phone. If two phones are available, talk into one as if having a conversation with the baby. Show him how to hold the receiver to his ear and encourage him to talk back and forth with the parent even if he can’t say real words. Hold the receiver to the baby’s ear and let adults talk to him. He may smile in recognition of the familiar voice. Once the child can talk, hold a receiver to his ear and ask him questions, and prompt him to answer rather than shake his head “yes” and “no.” When family or friends call, let him talk briefly with them on the phone.

(This activity encourages imitation of other people, develops an interest in spoken language and communication, encourages imagination, and provides practice with social skills.)

9 Months-5 Years—Baby Ball Games

Balls are a great toy for babies and young children at various ages. They can help introduce babies to the delight of social interaction with others. Before a baby actually can catch, toss or kick a ball, he will enjoy being held by a parent and swung so that his feet hit or “kick” a soft ball like a beach ball. The parent can even set up a target or basket on the floor and move the baby around so that the ball is “kicked” toward the goal. Older children or adults can get involved to make it a real team effort by rolling the ball to the baby “kicker.” As the baby matures, additional games with balls can be added that involve catching, tossing, and holding a ball.

At about two years, a child can sit and toss a beach ball or other soft ball back and forth to another person. It is easier for a child to sit when learning to toss and catch because they don’t have to balance at the same time. All ball play with babies and young children should be done gently and with soft balls that will not hurt them if the child is hit in the face or head. At about two and a half, when a child can toss a ball, variety can be added to ball play by putting out a bucket or tub of water or small swimming pool. The child will enjoy the splash the ball makes when it lands in the water. A small parachute can add to the fun of ball play at this age, especially if several children are together. A soft ball or several small balls can be placed on the parachute and bounced up and down as the children shake the edges of the parachute.

(Ball play at various ages helps develop eye-hand and eye-foot coordination and strengthens large muscles. Ball play helps develop control of reflexes, spatial awareness, and good timing. It also promotes social interaction, appreciation for non-competitive games, and develops a beginning understanding of “game rules” and taking turns.)

12-15 Months—Where Is Mommy?

This game can be played when there are several people in the room whom the baby knows very well. Ask, “Where is Mommy?” Point to mommy and say, “Here is Mommy.” Continue with the other people in the room. The baby may turn and look at the person named or smile at them. Continue to point to them and say the person’s name. Ask where the baby is and call him by name so that he also recognizes his

own name. The whole family can help reinforce the baby's efforts by praising and clapping when he turns or points to the correct person.

(This game reinforces close bonds with the people who care most about the baby, connects the people to their names, and helps develop a sense of self.)

18 Months-3 Years—Build a House, Build a Town

Beginning at about six months, empty boxes, nesting cups, and plastic kitchen storage boxes all are great fun for a baby to practice stacking. By eighteen months a toddler will enjoy sitting on the floor and playing with building blocks. Sponge and soft sculpture blocks are a good choice for a young child because if they tumble over, they will not hurt the toddler.

As toddlers mature and show an interest in imaginary play at about two years, suggest building a house. Perhaps add people or animals to the structure. If the child enjoys the game, suggest adding houses for other people and other buildings in the community such as a school, hospital, post office, or police station. Two-year-olds enjoy running cars, trucks, and other vehicles on a path or road, through box tunnels, and over block bridges.

(Blocks encourage imaginative play and improve eye-hand coordination. The shapes form the basis for later understanding of geometric shapes, measurement, balance, and weights. Knocking down blocks provides a healthy outlet for aggression and gives a shy child a sense of power and control over the environment. The child gains a sense of community by adding the people characters and vehicles he sees around him.)

18 Months-5 Years—Be My Helper

Toddlers enjoy watching parents go through the normal daily routines of caring for a home and car. They want to be actively involved and try to imitate what they see their parents doing. Allow the child to use the same or similar tools as the parent. A parent using a feather duster can offer one to the toddler so the child can help "dust." Toddlers may enjoy running a toy vacuum while the parent uses a real one.

A parent can allow a toddler to stand next to him to do dishes and allow the child to wash plastic containers, cups, and spoons while the adult handles the breakable and sharp items. A toddler will delight in helping hold the hose to wash the car or carrying his own watering can to help water flowers. Until a child is about five years old, he cannot really be expected to manage assigned "chores" around the house but he will enjoy "helping."

(Children learn by observing others, especially parents. "Helping" builds confidence and gives the child a sense of accomplishment. It helps build self-esteem, promotes the development of coordination and large muscle strength. It gives a child practice with role playing and helps him identify himself as part of the family. Involving young children with daily activities also keeps the child busy and makes supervision much easier.)

2-5 Years—Give Dolly a Bath

Starting at about age two, a child can practice imitating gentleness and care for other people by playing with dolls. Playing "Mommy" or "Daddy" with a washable doll helps him develop a sense of nurturing and caring for other people. It can teach him to be very gentle and careful around younger children and babies.

(Playing bath time helps a child think through the sequence of taking a bath and reinforces safety issues in the bathtub. It helps develop social skills. Playing with and bathing a doll helps develop body awareness.)

2-5 Years—Car Wash

Children love to help wash a car and can be given their own sponge or cloth and bucket to help. With a parent's help, the child can even be allowed to direct the water from the hose.

(Young children learn by imitating adults. They learn to take responsibility by helping parents with chores long before they can actually manage their own responsibilities around the house. Playing with water helps children learn important math and science concepts.)

2-5 Years—Dress-Up

Dress-up clothes and other props help children play out the activities and roles they observe around them. Both boys and girls need to have props and dolls to play house. This helps them understand what mothers and fathers do in a family. Children may enjoy trying on clothes and using tools that adults use when they work—a fire hat and a hose, a telephone and a computer keyboard, toy food and a shopping cart.

(Dress-up play stimulates the imagination. It helps children internalize the work they see adults do around them. It can help them work through problems they are having or emotions they are experiencing. A Superman cape may help children imagine themselves as powerful people who can protect themselves from everything that frightens them.)

2-5 Years—Playing Doctor, Dentist or Vet

Props that help a child play out the role of “doctor” or “vet” allow a child to deal with fears they might have about visiting a doctor or dentist. It is an opportunity for the child to practice a care giving role. He can determine what is wrong, the treatment, do the follow-up care, and even decide when the patient is “all better.”

(These activities help teach a child empathy and compassion for other people and animals. They provide a good opportunity to talk about important health issues like eating good food in appropriate amounts, washing hands to kill germs, and not spreading germs by coughing and sneezing on other people. If a child is facing medical procedures or hospitalization, playing out some of the situations the child will encounter can help prepare the child for what will happen and lessen the potential trauma the child might otherwise feel.)

2-5 Years—Circle Songs and Games

At about age two, a child begins to understand that some games have rules. He enjoys playing with other children, but often does not know how to interact. A parent can teach a child the words and motions to familiar circle songs and games such as “Ring-Around-The-Rosy,” “The Farmer in the Dell,” “London Bridge,” “Mulberry Bush,” and “Pop Goes the Weasel.” He will come to understand what he should do when he joins other children playing a game he recognizes.

(Circle games and songs give children a range of songs to sing to themselves. They enjoy the social companionship of holding hands with other children or adults, and begin to develop an understanding of and appreciation for cooperative play and “game rules.”)

FARM ANIMALS

Suggested Farm Animal Books

+ indicates CCBC Choices Book

- Acredolo, Linda Goodwyn. 2003. *Baby Signs for Animals*. HarperFestival. 0-06-009075-8. Board Book.
- +Arquette, Kerry. 2002. *What Did You Do Today?* Harcourt. 0-15-201414-4.
- Baker, Keith. 1994. *Big Fat Hen*. Harcourt. 0-1529-2869-3. Board Book.
- Boyer, Robin. 2000. *Guess Who*. School Zone. 0-88743606-4. Board Book.
- Boynton, Sandra. 1995, originally published 1982. *MOO, BAA, LA, LA, LA*. Little Simon. 0-671-44901-X. Board Book.
- Brown, Margaret Wise. 1995, originally published 1983. *Big Red Barn*. HarperFestival. 0-694-00624-6. Board Book. Also Big Book.
- Spanish Version: *El Gran Granero Rojo*. 0-0600-9107-X. Board Book.
- Cartwright, Stephen. 1999, originally published 1983. *Find the Piglet*. Usborne Publishing. 0-7460-3823-2. Board Book.
- Cowley, Joy. 1999. *Mrs. Wishy-Washy*. Wright Group. 0-3992-3391-1. Board Book.
- Fleming, Denise. 2001, originally published 1994. *Barnyard Banter*. Henry Holt. 0-8050-6594-6. Board Book.
- Galdone, Paul. 1985. *Little Red Hen*. Houghton Mifflin. 0-8991-9349-8.
- +Hindley, Judy. 2002. *Does a Cow Say Boo?* Candlewick. 0-7636-1718-0.
- My First Farm Board Book*. 2002. Dorling Kindersley. 0-7894-1412-3. Board Book.
- +Pearson Tracey Campbell. 2002. *Bob*. Farrar, Straus, Giroux. 0-374-39957-3.
- +Piers, Helen. 1999. *Who's in My Bed?* Marshall Cavendish. 0-7614-5046-7.
- +Schwartz, Amy 1999. *Old MacDonald*. Scholastic. 0-5904-6189-3.
- +Shannon, David. 2002. *Duck on a Bike*. Blue Sky/Scholastic. 0-4390-5023-5.
- Tafari, Nancy. 1994. *This Is the Farmer*. Greenwillow. 0-688-09468-6.
- +Tolstoy, Aleksie. 1999. *The Gigantic Turnip*. Barefoot Books. 1-8414-8157-2.
- Touch and Feel Farm*. 1998. Dorling Kindersley. 0-7894-2916-0. Board Book, Touch and Feel.
- +Wormell, Mary. 2000. *Why Not?* Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 0-374-38422-3.
- +Ziefert, Harriet and Simms Taback. 2002. *Who Said Moo?* Handprint Books. 1-929766-47-5. Board Book, Lift the Flap.

Suggested Recorded Music for Farms

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Splashing in the Bath with My Little Rubber Duckie," "To Market To Market," "Shoe a Little Pony," "Shoe a Little Horse," "This Is the Way the Ladies Ride," "Trit Trot," and "Trot to Boston."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDL. Cassette with words. See "Old MacDonald," and "Bingo."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Piggy Toes."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi in Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "Tingalayo," "Five Little Ducks" and "Everything Grows."
- Raffi. 1982. *Raffi Rise and Shine*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-39-4. Cassette with words. See "Five Little Ducks" and "Ducks Like Rain."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See "Baa Baa Black Sheep" and "Old MacDonald Had A Band."
- Sesame Street. 1995. *Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. Sony Wonder. B000002B8G. Cassette with words. See "Rubber Duckie" and "Put Down the Duckie" and "Lambaba."

Suggested Props for a Farm Animal Story Time

- Toy barn and plastic and/or stuffed farm animals, including rubber ducks, for all the children. (Ask parents in advance to bring some of these to the program.)
- Toy food and water for the animals and something in which to keep the food or pour the water:
- Dried corn kernels or raw oats in a large open container.
- Cups or scoops and buckets to use with the grain.
- A container and water to use to wash the animals.
- A real halter and lead rope, and string for the toy animals.
- A real saddle fitted over a wide low chair seat and saddle bags.
- Farm animal stickers.
- Dog or cat feeding dishes.
- Cowboy hat, old fashioned straw hat, modern “farmer’s hat”—a baseball cap.
- Wagon or toy wheelbarrow.
- Live baby farm animals.
- Oriental Trading Company has delightful felt chicken hats.

Extended Program Ideas for Farm Animals

Rubber Ducks

At registration time, inform parents that they should bring a rubber duck or other squeak toy to this program. Have a few extra on hand. Several of the songs in the bibliography feature a rubber duck. These stories can be combined with duck fingerplays. Parents can squeak the rubber ducks in time to the music for their babies and help toddlers squeak the ducks themselves. This activity might be good to do toward the end of the program because the toddlers might not want to give up the ducks or stop squeaking them when the activity is over.

Washing Animals

If the library has the space and interest, bring in a pan or bucket of water and let the toddlers give a bath to rubber or plastic animals. It might be possible to borrow a water table from a local preschool or kindergarten for the day. This is a fun activity to do outside on a nice day because it is likely the toddlers will get wet, and the water will splash out of the pan or water table. Talk about names of the animals and describe them.

Sensory Experiences with Dried Corn and Oats

Fill a bucket or pan half full with dried corn or oats. Put a drop cloth on the floor to make clean-up easy. Let toddlers put their hands into the grain to feel it, and let it run through their fingers. Give them cups or scoops so they can scoop up some grain and pour it into another container. Let each child scoop some grain into a bucket and carry it over to a feeding container for the farm animals and pour the grain from their bucket into the dishes for the animals, putting some in each dish.

Pouring is an important activity for young children to practice. It improves their eye-hand coordination, helps them understand concepts such as “full,” “more,” and “too much!” Planned pouring time gives a young child practice in controlling the flow of liquid or solids as it comes out of a container. This helps them learn to pour milk, juice, and cereal for themselves. Small plastic pitchers at home allow children to practice at the table without the risk of using an entire carton of milk. Pouring gives children a chance to understand that they have to clean up messes.

Putting food into one container for each animal helps a toddler develop the important math readiness skill of “one-to-one correspondence.” When young children begin to count, they do not understand that each number must be matched with one object. (They often count verbally as they touch objects, but skip many and count some several times.)

Saddle Play

If a real saddle is available, perhaps one of the parents could bring it; older babies and toddlers will love to take a turn sitting on it. They get a sense of how wide a horse is as their legs spread to the sides of the saddle. They love to grasp the saddle horn.

Saddle Bags

Saddle bags can serve the same function as a beach bag or purse, pockets for young children. They love to guess what might be inside, to open the flaps, take something out, and put things back in again. If the librarian wears bib overalls to the program on farm animals, he can use the pockets to hide things a farmer uses, or toy animals, and take them out for the program as needed.

Farmer Hats

Toddlers may enjoy trying on a cowboy or farmer's hat and looking at themselves in a mirror.

Giving Animals Rides

Toddlers enjoy putting stuffed or plastic animals in a wagon or wheelbarrow and giving them rides.

Live Farm Animals at the Library

Live animals are of great interest to babies and toddlers. If a farm animal is available and the library environment can be adapted to accommodate the animal's needs and safety, bringing it into a story program can enhance the experience for the children. For the protection of the animal, all animals should be brought into a program in a kennel or cage the children cannot open or reach into on their own. The children should sit with their parents around the animal when it is taken out of the cage. The children can either watch the animal move freely around inside the circle, perhaps with some sort of barrier to prevent it from coming right up to the children, or an adult can bring the animal around for each child to see close up or touch.

Good choices are adult dogs or cats that are used to being handled by young children. A rabbit that is used to being handled may accept food offered by the children. With the proper floor protection, container, and control, a baby pig, goat, or lamb would be very interesting. Children enjoy watching animals drink milk from a bottle.

Many professional dog breeders own portable exercise pens. They might be willing to lend one to the library for a day. These wire mesh pens are sturdy and would work well to contain an animal, allow young children a good view, and yet keep them from getting too close.

Baby ducklings or chicks are appealing, but are very fragile and care must be taken that the young children cannot grab them or squeeze them. These animal babies move very quickly and may startle human babies. A chicken, rooster, duck, goose, or turkey would all be interesting, but they must be kept in a cage. They might bite if children put their fingers near them.

Parents can help their babies and toddlers touch the animals by encouraging them to be gentle and "touch the baby with one finger." The parent tucks one of the child's arms down or holds that hand, and holds the fingers of the child's other hand down with the exception of the index finger. The parent guides the child's finger in a gentle stroking motion. This prevents the child from suddenly grabbing the animal. Some children are afraid of animals and will not want to touch or get too close to them. If a child is afraid, often backing away and putting space between the child and the animal will help calm him.

Group Game—Farmer in the Dell

Toddlers enjoy a shortened version of "The Farmer in the Dell."

Art Suggestion—Animals in the Barn

Let the child and parent glue down pre-cut shapes, stickers, or pictures of farm animals on a red construction paper sheet cut in the shape of a barn. Or cut a barn door that opens by lifting two flaps and let the animals "walk" through the door and go in and out of the barn. Have each parent bring a cardboard box and glue the barn shape to the box, then cut the cardboard doors open and let the children take home their barns to play with plastic farm animals.

Suggested Farm Animal Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

PIGS

"This is The Way We Wash a Pig"

Sing to tune of "Mulberry Bush"

This is the way we wash a pig,

(Infants—Parent gently uses a soft cloth to

pretend to wash the baby.)

Wash a pig, wash a pig.

(Toddlers—Parent and child wash a toy pig in a container of water or just pretend.)

Splish! Splish! Splish! Splish! Splash!

This is the way we wash a pig,

Oink, Oink, Oink, Oink, Oink.

Repeat substituting a new animal name:

This activity provides sensory stimulation and fosters bonding between the child and parent. It helps develop vocabulary. If a toddler uses water to wash various farm animals, the child learns to associate the name and the sound of the animal with how it looks.

“This Little Piggy Went to the Market”

This little piggy went to the market.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently wiggles each of the child’s toes or fingers.)

This little piggy stayed home.

This little piggy had roast beef.

This little piggy had none.

And this little piggy cried,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles last toe or finger through the end of rhyme.)

“Wee, wee, wee,” all the way home.

“To Market, To Market”

To market, to market, to buy a fat pig.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent holds child on lap and bounces them up and down.)

Home again, home again, jiggy jig.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent stops bouncing child suddenly on the last word and pauses slightly.)

To market, to market, to buy a fat hog,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent resumes bouncing.)

Home again, home again, jiggy jog

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent again stops bouncing child suddenly on the last word and pauses.)

To market, to market, to buy a plum bun.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent resumes bouncing.)

Home again, home again, market is done.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent dips child toward the floor on the last word; stops and lifts them again to sitting position.)

Parents can set a routine of saying the rhyme when going to and coming home, to help a baby or toddler anticipate the activity that is going to happen or to help them understand the outing is over.

“Five Little Piggies”

Five little piggies had my dad.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles each of the child’s fingers or toes in turn.)

Good one, bad one, happy one, sad one.

And this little piggy was mad, mad, mad!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles last finger or toe longer than the others and makes a mad or pouting face.)

Five little piggies had my dad.

This rhyme might help make an angry or pouting child smile and help get them into a better mood.

“Two Mother Pigs”

Two mother pigs lived in a pen.

*(Infants—Parent holds up the baby’s thumbs.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up two thumbs.)*

Each of them had four babies and

*(Infants—Parent holds up the fingers on each of the baby’s hands and folds down thumbs.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up four fingers on each hand.)*

That made ten.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child wave all ten fingers.)

These four babies were black and white.

(Infants—Parent gently squeezes the four fingers on one hand and then the four on the other.)

These four babies were black as night.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent helps child wiggle just the four fingers on one hand, and then on the other.)

All eight babies loved to play.

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s hands in rolling motion.)

And they rolled and they rolled
In the mud all day.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child roll hands.)

At night, with their mother,

(Infants—Parent closes baby’s fingers over thumb to make a fist.)

They curled up in a heap

(Toddlers—Parent helps child close fingers over each thumb.)

And squealed and squealed

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes piggy noises.)

‘Til they fell asleep.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes snoring noises and closes eyes.)

CHICKENS AND DUCKS

“Hickety Pickety, My Black Hen”

Hickety pickety my black hen.

(Infants—Parent makes egg shape with fingers for baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make egg shape with fingers on both hands.)

She lays eggs for gentlemen.

Gentlemen come every day.

Sometimes nine, and sometimes ten.

(Infants—Parent holds nine of the baby’s fingers, then all of them.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold one thumb down for nine and then put up all fingers for ten.)

Hickety pickety my black hen.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

“I Had a Little Hen”

I had a little hen, the prettiest ever seen.

(Infants—Parent holds baby in the air and smiles at him.)

(Toddlers—Parent hugs child.)

She washed the dishes and kept the house clean.

(Infants—Parent pretends to sweep with baby as a broom, gently swinging the baby back and forth.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make motions for washing dishes.)

She went to the mill to fetch me some flour.

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s legs in a walking motion.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to walk in place.)

She brought it home in less than an hour.

She baked me my bread; she brewed me my ale.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently kneads and pats child’s tummy or back.)

She sat by the fire and told many a fine tale.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent puts child on the parent’s lap and uses hands to pretend to open a book.)

“The Cock’s on the Housetop”

The cock’s on the housetop.

(Infants—Parent lifts baby over head and crows.)

Blowing his horn.

(Toddlers—Parent flaps child’s arms like wings and crows.)

The bull’s in the barn

(Infants—Parent moos for baby.)

A-threshing the corn.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make bull horns and moos.)

The maids in the meadow

(Infants—Parent alternates moving first one of the baby’s arms up to his shoulder and back and then the other.)

Are making the hay.

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to pitch hay over the shoulder with a pitchfork.)

The ducks in the river

(Infants—Parent swims baby through the air.)

Are swimming away.

(Toddlers—Parent puts child’s palms together for the duck and makes swimming motions.)

“My Rooster”

“Mi Gallo”

(me guy-yo’)

My Rooster died

Mi gallo se murió
(me guy-yo,’ say moor-ee-yo’)

(Infants—Parent strokes the top of the baby’s head.)

Yesterday, yesterday.

Ayer, ayer.
(a-yer’, a-yer’)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child stick out thumb and raise hand over shoulder to indicate yesterday is behind the child.)

He will sing no more.

Ya no cantrará.
(ya no cahn-tar’-a)

(Infants—Parent puts finger to lips in “shishing” sign.)

Cocori, cocora	Cocori', cocorá (coco-ree', coco-ra')	<i>(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands in rhythm with the words.)</i>
Cocori, cori	Corcori', cori'	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a beak with thumb and pointer finger and “sings” by opening and closing them.)</i>
Cocori, cora	Corcori', cora'	
Cocori, cori	Corcori', cori'	
Cocori, cora	Corcori', corá	

*The music for this song can be found in *Diez Deditos, Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America* by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997. This action song is popular in many Latin American countries.*

Sheep

“Little Bo Peep”

Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent looks worried and looks around as the first two lines are said.)

And doesn't know where to find them.

Leave them alone and they'll come home,

Wagging their little tails behind them.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently wiggles the child by the seat of the pants or diaper.)

“Mary Had a Little Lamb”

Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent pets and pats child's back or head.)

Mary had a little lamb, his fleece was white as snow.

Everywhere that Mary went, Mary went, Mary went,

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent walks fingers of one hand up the child's back or arm.)

Everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go.

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent walks fingers of both hands down the child's back or arm, with one set following the other.)

Horses

“This Is the Way the Ladies Ride”

This is the way the ladies ride,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent holds child's hands and gently and slowly bounces child on parent's lap or legs.)

Nim, nim, nim.

This is the way the gentlemen ride

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent bounces child a little faster.)

Trim, trim, trim.

This is the way the farmers ride

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gives child a very

choppy bounce and tosses child from side to side.)

Hobbily hoy, hobbily hoy
This is the way the hunters ride

Gallop, a-gallop, a-gallop, a-gallop.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gives a smooth but very fast ride.)

“Horsie, Horsie”

Horsie, horsie, don't you stop,

Just let your feet go clippety clop;
Your tail goes swish,

And the wheels go 'round.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent trots child's feet together or alternately on the floor.)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent swishes child's bottom.)

(Infants—Parent moves baby in a circle.)

(Toddlers—Parent makes rolling motion with hands.)

Giddyup, you're homeward bound!

(Infants—Parent bounces baby as if she were riding a horse.)

(Toddlers—Parent gallops child's feet on floor.)

“If Wishes Were Horses”

If wishes were horses,

Then beggars would ride.
If turnips were watches,
I'd wear one by my side.
And if “ifs” and “ands”
Were pots and pans,
There'd be no work for tinkers.

(Infants—Parent bounces baby on parent's lap.)

(Toddlers—Child sits on parent's legs near feet facing the parent. The parent holds the child's hands and bounces him.)

“One to Make Ready”

One to make ready,

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands together once.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up one finger.)

And two to prepare.

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands a second time.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up two fingers.)

Good luck to the rider,
And away goes the mare.

(Infants—Parent picks up baby and runs a

short distance.)

(Toddlers—Parent grabs child and runs. As the child learns the game, the child may start to run and the parent chases the child.)

This game helps a child practice cadence and anticipation. By teaching the child to wait until the last line to start to run, the child learns game rules.

Multiple Farm Animals

“Father, and Mother and Uncle John”

Father and Mother and Uncle John

(Infants—Parent bounces baby on lap and tips baby slightly to each side as Father and Mother fall off.)

Went to market one by one.

(Toddler—Parent places child on lap and bounces knees. Parent tips child to one side and then the other, as Father and Mother fall off, or opens knees and lets child drop slightly.)

Father fell off.

Mother fell off.

But Uncle John went on and on and on.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently, but quickly bounces child on parent’s knees.)

Group Games

Chicken Dance

Toddlers enjoy wearing chicken hats and dancing to the “Chicken Dance” with their parent or care giver.

“Baby Farmer in the Dell”

The librarian touches a parent and child to go into the circle for each verse. All the parents and children come into the circle on the last line.

The farmer in the dell.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks in circle and sings verses.)

The farmer in the dell.

(Librarian stands in center and selects children and parents for each animal verse.)

Hi Ho the derry-o

The farmer in the dell.

Continue with:

The farmer has some cows, ducks, and pigs.

(Infant and Toddlers—Parent moos, quacks, oinks.)

The farmer feeds them all.....

Infant and Toddlers—Parent and child pretend to eat.)

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Bubbles and Bath—“My Duck Says Quack”

Colors and Counting—“Baa Baa Black Sheep,” “Five Little Chickies,” “Hickety Pickety, My Black Hen,”

“Little Boy Blue”

Food—“Hey Diddle Diddle”

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Farm Animals

3-6 Months—Ba, Ba, Baby

To the tune of Old MacDonald, sing the same syllable instead of words, and let the baby watch the shape of the mouth.

Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Baby
Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, O
Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Baby
Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, O

(Very young babies are very interested in the human face, especially a parent's face. When they watch an adult speak to them, they may try to open their own mouth in imitation of the parent. By watching the parent's face and listening to a repeated sound, babies begin to understand how to make vocal sounds themselves. This practice is part of the process of learning to speak.)

3-6 Months—Farm Animal Book

Put pictures of farm animals into re-sealable baggies and tape the baggies together to form a book. Or put the pictures between plastic sheets in a small photo album. Let him page through the book. Name and describe the animals he sees. Encourage him to say the name of the animal or make a baby hand sign for it. Another way to do something similar is to punch holes in greeting cards and string them together to form a book. Or glue the pictures onto paper or plastic plates, punch holes, and string them together.

(Naming exercise, page turning skills, and eye-hand coordination.)

0-3 Months—Farm Finger Puppets

Cut the finger tips off disposable rubber gloves and draw animal faces on the tips with a pen. Use these as finger puppets to sing to the baby or to touch or tickle body parts as they are named. Do not let the baby handle these plastic finger puppets as they could cause choking. Throw them away at the end of the game or put them where the baby will not accidentally find them. Another way to do this activity is to draw an animal with a felt tip pen on your finger and use your thumb or finger as the puppet.

(Eye tracking, body awareness, naming animals, and learning the rhythm of language through music.)

6-15 Months—Where Is the Cow?

Take the lid off a box and put a plastic cow inside. Ask the baby, "Where is the cow?" Take the lid off the box and show the animal to him. Repeat and encourage him to look for the animal and take the lid off himself. If he enjoys the game, add another box so that he has to look inside two boxes instead of one to find the hidden animal. Repeat with different plastic animals.

(Eye-hand coordination, develops a sense of "object permanence" (that something still is there even if the baby can't see it). A sense of "object permanence" helps the baby stay calm when a parent leaves because the baby knows the parent will come back.)

9-12 Months—Leg Horse

The baby may enjoy being bounced as the parent recites the words to "This Is the Way the Ladies Ride." When a baby is old enough to sit up comfortably by herself, she may enjoy a game of horsie on dad's legs. The parent holds the baby on his knees facing him, then bounces his knees gently as a horse rhyme is repeated.

(This activity helps develop a sense of rhythm and balance.)

9-15 Months—Get the Pigs Out of the Mud

Cut out a piece of contact paper to put over a piece of cardboard; place the contact paper with the sticky side facing up, and use duct tape to tape the contact paper to the cardboard. Walk plastic pigs or other farm animals onto the contact paper and let them stick there. Encourage the baby to pull the pigs or other animals off the paper. Tell him the animals are "stuck in the mud" and encourage him to pull them

out. Praise him for being so strong and for saving the animals. Repeat if he is enjoying the game. Encourage him to put the animals on the paper as well as pull them off. Talk about the stickiness of the paper.

A related game is to put out plastic or stuffed animals and encourage the baby to push them. Count to three and say, "Push." Demonstrate how to push the animals and tell the child to help you push the animal out of the mud.

(Pulling and pushing develop a sense of power and strength which leads to self confidence. This game encourages vocabulary development and texture exploration.)

9-12 month—Feed the Animals

Take an animal and tell the child the horse is hungry. Talk about what horses like to eat, hay, grass, apples, carrots. Offer the horse some food to eat. If plastic food toys are available, select an appropriate one and "feed" it to the horse. Smack lips to pretend to be the horse eating.

Or ask the horse if he is hungry and answer for the horse.

"Hello Mr. Horse. Are you hungry?"

"Oh yes, I'm very hungry."

"What would you like to eat?"

"I would like some apples and carrots, please."

"Ok here you go. Here is an apple. I'll hold it for you while you eat."

"Thank you. This tastes very good."

"Now would you like a carrot?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Here is your carrot."

(In addition to helping develop vocabulary, this exercise stimulates the imagination and helps the child develop a sense of responsibility and nurturing in a care giving role.)

9-12 Months—Go into the Barn

Sit with the baby on the floor and put out some farm animals and a large paper sack on its side, a shoe box, or toy barn. Pick up an animal and say its name, make the sound or hand sign for the animal. Then walk it into the sack or under the box and say, "Cow, it's time to go into the barn." Ask the child which animal has to go in the barn next and repeat. Or ask the child to let the animal out of the barn. Continue putting animals in and out of the sack or under the box, and talk about where the animal is each time until the baby tires of the game.

12-24 Months—Pet the Puppy

Select a stuffed animal that feels and looks very realistic. Talk about how soft the animal feels, and that the animal is just a baby so it needs to be touched and handled very gently. Demonstrate how to pet the animal with just the pointer finger and how to stroke it from front to back. Kiss and cuddle the animal toy and encourage the toddler to pet it. First touch it with one finger, and later touching it gently with the whole hand. Pretend the toy is real, show him how to cradle it gently in his arms, and explain that he should not squeeze or drop the animal.

(This activity helps the child moderate their touch so they touch and handle a live animal or small baby without hurting it. It fosters a sense of caring and nurturing, which children need in order to form close, trusting relationships with other people.)

2-5 Years—Water the Animals

Pouring is a popular activity for preschool children. It teaches about things being "full" or "empty," or "too much," and about "fast" and "slow." Put out several plastic farm animals on a waterproof surface and tell the child the animals need a drink of water. Help the child put a paper cup in front of each animal. Then give the child a small plastic pitcher or plastic measuring cup about half full of water, and allow the child to try pouring water into each cup for the animals. Use encouraging language like "pour slowly," "not too much," "that's good," but allow the child to make mistakes by pouring in too much water. This is how a child learns. Have paper towels near by so the child can clean up "mistakes." Then help the child tip the animal's mouth into the cup and pretend to take a drink.

If the family has a pet, the child can help, with supervision, to put food and water in the pet's feeding dishes, although he is much too young at this age to take full responsibility for an animal by himself.

(Basic science and math principles are explored when a child pours water. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. It improves eye-hand coordination and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another. It also stimulates the child's imagination and allows him to play a care giver role.)

2-3 Years—Hide and Seek Piggy

Put out about three different-colored, plastic cups or containers and some plastic pigs or other farm animals. Talk about the animal and then cover it with one of the cups. Ask the child to find it. Vary the game by moving the cups around after a pig is under one of them. Praise the child when she finds the pig and for continuing to look if she selects the wrong cup the first time.

(Remembering where an object is promotes visual memory continuing to look for a missing animal teaches persistence and problem solving.)

2-5 Years—Play Vet

With plastic or stuffed farm animals, encourage the child to play "doctor." Tell the child the cow is sick and ask for ideas on how to help. Pretend to give the cow some medicine in a spoon. Or put a real band-aid on the "boo-boo." Help the child wrap gauze strips around the animal's leg or head. Pat the animal and assure it that it will feel better pretty soon. If the child has a toy doctor or vet kit, use the tools in it to examine the animals.

(Manipulating the animals helps develop coordination. The activity also fosters imagination and develops a sense of nurturing and caring for animals and other people.)

2-5 Years—Wash the Dirty Pigs

One way to add interest to water play is to let a child wash plastic animals. Start a story about how the pigs got dirty and that their mother has to give them a bath. Encourage the child to give ideas for the story and to build on the basic concept.

(Water play can calm an excited or tired child and stimulate a quiet passive child. This activity gives the child a chance to practice a parental role, stimulates the imagination, and helps the child understand the sequence of a story. This is an important reading readiness skill.)

FAVORITE THINGS

Suggested Favorite Things Books

+ indicates a *CCBC Choices* book

- Acredolo, Linda and Susan Goodwyn. 2002. *My First Baby Signs*. HarperFestival. 0-06-009074-X. Board Book.
- +Ahlberg, Janet and Allan. 1999. *Doll and Teddy*. Little Brown. 0-316-03846-6.
- Baker, Alan. 1999. *Gray Rabbit's Odd One Out*. Larousse Kingfisher Chambers. 0-7534-5257-X.
- +Bang, Molly. 1994. *One Fall Day*. Greenwillow. 0-688-07015-9.
- +Buckley, Helen. 1999. *Where Did Josie Go?* Lothrop Lee & Shepard. 0-688-16507-9.
- Cauley, Lorinda Bryan. 1990. *Clap Your Hands*. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 0-399-23710-0.
- Cousins, Lucy. 2001. *Maisy's Favorite Toys*. Candlewick. 0-7636-1571-4. Board Book.
Spanish Version: *Las Cosas Favoritas de Maisy*. 8-4950-4012-3.
- +Ehrlich, H.M. 2000. *Louie's Goose*. Walter Lorraine Books/Houghton Mifflin. 0-618-03023-9.
- +Fleming, Denise. 2000. *The Everything Book*. Henry Holt. 0-805-06292-0.
- Gentieu, Penny. 2000, originally published 1998. *Baby! Talk!* Crown. 0-517-80079-9. Board Book.
- +George, Kristine O'Connell. 2001. *Book!*. Clarion. 0-395-98287-1.
- +Henkes, Kevin. 1996. *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*. Greenwillow. 0-688-12897-1.
- Hest, Amy. 2002. *Baby Duck and the Cozy Blanket*. Candlewick. 0-7636-1582-X. Board Book.
- +Lindgren, Barbro. 2002. *Benny and the Binky*. R & S Books. 91-29-65497-1.
- Miller, Margaret. 2001. *Peekaboo Baby*. Little Simon. 0-689-84433-6. Board Book.
- Oxenbury, Helen. 1999. *All Fall Down*. Little Simon. 0-689-81985-4. Board Book.
- Simmons, Jane. 1999. *Daisy's Favorite Things*. Little Brown. 0-316-79762-6. Board Book.
- Weatherford, Carole. 1997. *My Favorite Toy*. Black Butterfly Books. 0-8631-6215-0.

Suggested Recorded Music for Favorite Things

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD with words. See "All For Baby."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDLD. Cassette. with words. See "Pat-A-Cake."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Daddy Be a Horsie," "Don't Wash My Blanket," "Lovey and Me," "My Mommy Comes Back," "Raggedy Rag Doll Friend," "Teddy Bear," "Baby's First," "Peek-A-Boo," and "Teddy Bear Ball."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. CD with words. See "Bumping Up and Down," "My Dreydel," and "The Sharing Song."
- Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. 1995. Sony Wonder. Cassette with words. B000002B8G. See "Rubber Duckie" and "Put Down the Duckie."

Suggested Props for a Favorite Things Story Time

- Baby blanket
- Pacifier
- Stuffed animals
- Rubber duck
- Nesting and stacking toys, stacking ring
- Pop up toys, Jack-in-the-Box
- Soft balls
- Sound blocks
- Beads in a block

- Soft sculpture or sponge blocks
- Beads on a wire track
- Balloons
- Baby dolls

Toys designed to have a baby put objects through a hole. There should only be one hole and it should be round for the youngest children. The hole should be big enough to allow the baby to reach inside and take the objects out.

Extended Program Ideas for Favorite Things

***Peekaboo Baby* by Margaret Miller**

Use this book to lead into one of the many ways to play Peek-A-Boo with babies of many different ages as described later in this chapter.

***Clap Your Hands* by Lorinda Bryan Cauley**

Let this story get the babies started on pat-a-cake and other clapping fun. Clapping games and activities such as “Pat-A-Cake” help develop a sense of rhythm and timing. Toddlers may enjoy a version of “Open Them, Shut Them.”

***Baby Duck and the Cozy Blanket* by Amy Hest or *Benny and the Binky* by Barbro Lindgren.**

Tell the parents in advance to bring a favorite blanket with them to the program, and encourage the parents to tell what the baby seems to like about it. Have extra baby receiving blankets to share if someone forgot to bring one. After reading the book, play some of the blanket games described later in this handout. Have a doll and pacifier out when you read *Benny and the Binky*.

Rubber Ducks

At registration time, inform parents that they should bring a rubber duck or other squeak toy to this program. Have a few extra on hand. Play the rubber duckie songs suggested in the bibliography on the Sesame Street cassette. Ernie loves his rubber duckie and wants to play with it all the time. It’s his favorite toy. Parents can squeak the rubber ducks in time to the music for their babies and help toddlers squeak the ducks themselves. This activity might be good to do toward the end of the program because the toddlers might not want to give up the ducks or stop squeaking them when the activity is over.

Balls, Balloons and Other Favorite Toys

Read any of the books about toys and have several different types on hand. Demonstrate different types of activities and explain the value the toys have for little ones at different ages. (Babies and toddlers should not be left alone with balloons or be allowed to put their mouths on them because if they pop, the pieces can choke a baby.)

Group Game—Ring-Around-the-Rosy

Read *All Fall Down* by Helen Oxenbury and then play any of the many circle games that are favorite activities for toddlers. A good one to start with is “Ring-Around-The-Rosy.” Circle games like this one do not have winners or losers. They simply help a child understand that games have “rules,” and that following them is fun for everyone.

Art Project—Homemade Toys

Toddlers need time to explore art materials. They are more interested in process than product. Let them experiment with “chunky sized” crayons, markers, and large paint brushes. It doesn’t really matter if they take home something that “looks like something.” Up to the age of about three, toddler development requires exploration but representational objects or beginning writing activities do not show up for some time. As an alternative project, the parent can work with the child to create any of the homemade versions of popular toys described in this section.

Suggested Favorite Things Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

“Here’s a Ball for Baby”

Here’s a ball for baby, *(Infants—Parent forms a circle with the baby’s arms.)*
Big and soft and round. *(Toddlers—Parent helps child form circle with arms.)*
Here is baby’s hammer. *(Infants—Parent holds baby’s hands or legs and makes a gentle pounding motion.)*
See how he can pound. *(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to pound a hammer.)*

Have on hand some of the many sizes and types of balls that are good for babies and toddlers at different ages and stages, and demonstrate some of the ball activities included in this handout.

“My Balloon”

I had a little red balloon *(Infants—Parent pretends the baby is a balloon, picks him up and raises him over head slowly, then brings him down.)*
(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a balloon shape with his hands.)
And I blew and blew and blew, *(Infants—Parent blows gently on the baby’s face or hands.)*
Until it grew and grew and grew. *(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to puff out cheeks and blow, while pretending to hold the balloon. As it grows, the child’s hands get farther and farther apart.)*
I tossed it in the air *(Infants—Parent gently bounces baby in the air.)*
And never let it drop. *(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to pretend to bounce the balloon in the air.)*
I bounced it on the ground *(Infants—Parent bends and bounces baby near the floor and suddenly swoops the baby up and looks surprised.)*
Until suddenly it went—POP! *(Toddlers—Parent pretends to dribble the balloon on the floor and clap once on “POP.”)*

To extend this activity, give the parents balloons to blow up for the child. Toddlers can place their hands on the side of the balloon and feel it get bigger. Let the air blow on the child. Bigger balloons are easier to blow up than little ones. Do not leave babies alone with balloons or allow them to put them near their mouths. A popping balloon can blow a piece into the child’s airway.

“Jack in the Box”

Jack in the box, *(Infants—Parent covers baby’s face with a light blanket.)*
Jack in the box, *(Toddlers—Parent helps child crouch down on the floor, or puts the child in a large cardboard box and closes one lid.)*
Sitting so still.
Will you pop out? *(Infants—Parent suddenly takes the blanket off the baby’s face and smiles.)*
“Yes, I will!” *(Toddlers—Parent helps child jump to her feet, or opens the box lid suddenly so child can jump up.)*

“Jack”

This is Jack.

(Infants—Parent covers baby’s face with a light blanket.)

In a box.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child crouch down in a cardboard box and closes one lid.)

Open the lid

(Infants—Parent suddenly takes the blanket off the baby’s face and smiles)

And out Jack pops!

(Toddlers—Parent opens the box lid suddenly and laughs when the child pops up.)

To help the children understand the game, let them play with some popup toys or a jack-in-the-box. Some young children are startled by the sudden motion and noise, but can tolerate the surprise if they are not too close. Pop-up toys typically are less frightening than a jack-in-the-box.

“The Top”

I am a top all wound up tight.

(Infants—Parent holds baby in arms and slowly turns in a circle a few times.)

I whirl and whirl with all my might.

(Toddlers—Parent puts hands under the child’s arms with the back of the child to the parent. Lift the child off the ground as the parent spins in a circle. This is safer than swinging the toddler by the wrists because it is easy to dislocate a young child’s shoulder joints.)

And now the whirls are out of me.

So I will rest as still as can be.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent comes to a stop and cuddles child.)

Many new tops for babies spin by just pushing the top down once, and they often spin in place. These are easier and safer to use with young children than the older type that needs to be “pumped.”

“Dear Dolly”

I have a dear little dolly.

(Infants—Parent cuddles baby as if he is the doll.)

My dolly is almost brand new.

(Toddlers—Parent can cuddle child or help the child cuddle a doll.)

My dolly’s eyes can open and shut.

(Infants—Parent opens and shuts eyes as baby watches.)

(Toddlers—Parent blinks at child and encourages child to blink too.)

And my dolly smiles at me too.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles at child.)

In the morning I dress my dolly,

(Infants—Parent pretends to dress baby.)

And we go out to play.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child put one item of clothes on the doll or pretends to dress child.)

But I like best to rock my dolly.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent rocks child.)

At the end of the day.

“My Bike”

One wheel, two wheels,

(Infants—Parent counts three of baby’s fingers or toes.)

Three wheels on the ground.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up three fingers in succession.)

My feet make the pedals go

(Infants—Parent gently peddles baby’s legs.)

'Round and 'round and 'round.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to lean back from a sitting position and peddle legs.)

Handle bars help me

Steer very straight.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent holds child's arms out as if steering a tricycle or big wheels.)

Right down the sidewalk

And through the gate.

“Jack Be Nimble”

Jack be nimble.

(Infants—Parent holds baby in a standing position and gently helps him “jump.”)

Jack be quick.

Jack jumped over

(Toddlers—Parent holds child's hand as he jumps over the string.)

The candle stick.

Put a piece of string or yarn on the floor and jump over it as the nursery rhyme is said. Wait to jump for the word “jump.” Let the child jump back and forth. If the child needs help, hold his hand. Substitute “Jill” for “Jack” or the child's own name. Jumping helps strengthen the leg muscles and helps develop large muscle coordination. It also encourages the child to listen to the rhyme and anticipate the exact moment to jump.

“Bounce Me”

This is the way we

(Infants—Parent holds baby in upright position and gently bounces her up and down. Or, the parent stands the baby on a hard surface and encourages the baby to bounce herself.)

Bounce, bounce, bounce.

(Toddlers—Parent bounces child on lap or puts child on the parent's legs, and bounces while holding the child's hands.)

Bounce, bounce, bounce.

Bounce, bounce, bounce.

This is the way we

Bounce up and down,

Every single day.

WHEEEEE!

“Ring-Around-the-Rosy”

Ring-Around-the-Rosy.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent and child walk in a circle holding hands, or parent carries the baby.)

A pocketful of posies.

Ashes, ashes.

We all fall down!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent and child sit down quickly on the floor.)

“Lower the Piñata”	“Bajen la Piñata” (ba-yen la pean-ya-ta)	
Lower the pinata.	Bajen la piñata. (ba-yen la pean-ya'-ta)	(Infants—Parent lifts baby in the air, then lowers her a little.) (Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to hold the rope of a pinata and lower it.)
Lower it a bit.	Bájenla un tantito. (ba-yen'-la oon tan-tee'-to)	(Infants—Parent lifts baby in the air, then lowers her a little.)
So that they can give it	Que le den de palos (kay lay den day pa'-los)	(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to lower a rope a little more.)
Another little hit!	Poquito a poquito. (poe-key'-toe ah poe-key'-toe)	(Infant—Parent pats baby's bottom.) (Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to hit at the pinata with a stick.)

Many American children have helped break a Mexican piñata. But, many American children and adults do not know that there is a song and game played when Mexican children break a piñata. These are the words to one verse.

Music for this rhyme can be found in *Los Pollitos Dicen/The Baby Chicks Sing* by Jay Choroa. Little, Brown and Company, 1994. Another version appears in *De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children* by José-Luis Orozco Dutton, 1994.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Counting—“Here’s A Ball”

Music—“Baby London Bridge,” “Where Is Thumbkin”

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Favorite Things

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-3 Months—Gazing

New babies need quiet time to just practice looking and focusing their eyes. New babies like to practice looking at a parent’s face. When the baby is alert, find a quiet place. Turn off background noise because new infants are easily over stimulated. The parent props the baby on the parent’s knees, and gazes into the baby’s eyes. This helps the baby relax and is an excellent bonding activity that fosters healthy emotional and social development. It also helps develop visual and listening skills.

Softly say the baby’s name, make faces at him, smile, raise eyebrows, open and close mouth, or stick out a tongue. The baby may watch intensely and may try to imitate the expressions. Even very young babies may stick out their tongue in imitation of a parent. If the baby turns away frequently or becomes restless, the baby is saying it is time to stop. A baby needs to withdraw from intense bursts of interaction to allow his brain time to process what he has learned.

Let a baby look at himself in a mirror. The infant won’t recognize himself until about 15 months, but he will be interested in looking at his own face. Mirror play helps the baby develop his sight, as well as learn social and emotional skills. Hold a mirror up for the baby when the baby is lying on his back or hold the baby and let him look into a mirror on a wall.

(Offers practice in focusing eyes and beginning muscle control. A baby develops her mouth and eye muscles before any others.)

0-3 Months—Can You Hear Me Now?

Put the baby in an infant seat in the middle of the room. Walk around the room and say her name, sing, or just talk to her. Move from one spot to another sometimes near the baby and sometimes farther away. Move close so the baby can both see and hear the parent, and gradually move away so she can only hear. The baby may not yet turn toward the sound, but will be able to hear the voice.

(This helps develop the baby's listening skills, and helps him practice locating the source of a sound.)

3-6 Months—Grab It!

At about three or four months, a baby starts to reach out for things she sees. Before that, a baby may kick and wave her hands with excitement when she sees or hears a toy that interests her. To encourage her to reach and take things, shake a rattle, or squeak another toy in front of the baby so she both sees it and hears the noise it makes. Praise and encourage her if she reaches for it.

(Reaching and grasping develops eye-hand coordination, and gives practice in listening to sounds and develops a beginning sense of accomplishment.)

3-6 Months—Squeeze It!

Put cellophane in a baby sock and tie it shut. (Not regular clear wrap, cellophane is similar, but heavier and makes more noise when crumpled. It is often available around Easter.) Let the baby squeeze it. Try bubble wrap too. Be sure to take the toy away when the game is over, and do not leave the baby alone with this toy. It is not safe without supervision.

(The cellophane stimulates both the sense of touch and hearing and helps develop texture discrimination, teaches comparisons, fosters eye-hand coordination, and builds vocabulary.)

3-9 Months—How Does It Feel?

Put out small pieces of different kinds of fabric such as cotton, fur, velvet, satin, netting, corduroy, and perhaps a feather. Gently brush the baby's skin with the softer textures. Hold out one piece at a time; and, as the baby reaches for it, talk about how it feels.

(The contrasting fabrics give the baby a chance to explore texture. Talking about the fabric builds vocabulary.)

3-18 Months—Texture Books

Collect several different textured fabric scraps such as wool, silk, flannel, fake fur, vinyl, corduroy, velvet, felt, netting, or lace. Cut into small squares and stitch them together with a needle and thread or bind them with tape. With the baby sitting on the lap, move her hand to touch the textured fabrics. Talk about how each piece feels. Let the baby turn the "pages" and stop when one interests her.

(Texture boxes stimulate the sense of touch and develop texture discrimination. They also teach comparisons, foster eye-hand coordination, and the discussion builds vocabulary.)

6-9 Months—Bounce Me

The parent sits on a chair with legs crossed at the ankles. The baby sits facing the parent. The parent holds the baby by his hands and gently bounces him. As the parent bounces, any rhythmic rhyme can be recited such as "Bounce Me" or "This is the Way the Ladies Ride."

(This game helps develop balance and bonding. Loving care by an adult is needed for a baby to develop healthy emotions and trust. If a baby is in a stressful environment, the brain is washed in hormones that eat away at the neural pathways and connections in the baby's brain. A baby who has good loving interactions with an adult develops the parts of the brain that help the baby calm herself when she gets upset.)

6-9 Months—In the Pot and Out of the Pot

Pots and pans make good toys for babies. Sit with the baby on the floor and put out some cooking pots and baby toys. Put a toy in a pot; then take it out explaining the activity. "Now the corn is in the pot. Now the corn is out of the pot." Let the baby try putting toys in and out and describe what he is doing as

he does it. Then turn a pot upside down, and put a toy under it. Ask him where the toy is; then lift the pot and show it to him.

(Problem solving and observation help make complicated neural circuits; the more of those connections the better. The baby is probably too young to understand when the toy is out of sight it is still there, so the baby may not turn over the pot to find the toy just yet.)

6-12 Months—Disappearing Scarf

Thread a scarf or piece of fabric through a paper towel tube and slowly tug it through the tube as the baby watches. Put it back in and encourage the baby to pull it out on his end. Talk about what is happening, and ask him where the scarf is.

(Playing games with an object that temporarily disappears helps develop a sense of *object permanence*—an object exists even if the baby can't see it. It also offers practice with eye-hand coordination and small muscle control.)

6-18 Months—Clapping and Pat-a-Cake

As a baby's hand coordination improves, the baby has a great deal of interest in what his hands can do. He likes to reach and grab things. He enjoys a game of clapping. He learns that people like to say good-bye to him by waving, and they respond with a smile when he waves at them.

He likes to have an adult help move his hands and say the pat-a-cake rhyme until he masters the clapping part for himself. The "roll them and roll them" part takes longer for the baby to learn on his own, but he likes to have someone help him roll his hands.

(Putting together music, words, and gestures helps develop vocabulary and a sense of rhythm. It also fosters social skills.)

6-18 Months—Toy Tops

A spinning toy fascinates babies. Tops that start when the top is pushed down are easier for babies to work than those that need to be pumped up and down to get started. Even if the parent has to start the top for the baby, she will enjoy stopping it herself by touching it.

(Toy tops help develop eye-hand coordination, a sense of cause and effect, and spatial awareness.)

6-18 Months—Nesting and Stacking Toys

Put out "nesting" toys that fit inside each other. Or put out some plastic food containers that fit into each other. Show the baby how one fits into the next and describe what is happening as the boxes or toys are stacked or nested. Encourage him to try to put one inside the other. Round nesting toys are easier for babies to work with than square or other shapes because they don't require much fitting.

Do the same thing with a "stacking" toy. Where each item fits on top of each other, and each one is a little smaller than the one below it. Nesting toys often make good stacking toys, too. Cover small gift boxes with contact paper to make a stacking toy. Or, stack soft building blocks on top of each other.

(Nesting toys help with eye-hand coordination, and develop pre-math skills of graduated differences in size and *sequencing*—the order in which things come. These toys teach beginning problem-solving skills and cause and effect. They also help develop the baby's eye-hand coordination.)

6-18 Months—Put It in There

Wash out an empty, gallon milk jug. Put out some round top clothespins or other items that will fit through the hole, but not be dangerous for the baby. Show the baby how to drop one into the opening in the bottle. Encourage her to try to get them into the jug. It is better to start with straight shapes like clothespins and a round hole. Later she may be ready to try to fit different shapes into specific holes. Shake the jug to make it rattle as the clothespins go into it.

(Toys that require a child to fit one object into or through another help develop pre-math skills of graduated differences in size and the order in which things come. This is called *sequencing*. These toys teach beginning problem-solving skills and cause and effect. They also help develop the baby's eye-hand coordination.)

6-18 Months—Stacking Rings

Show the baby how to put a plastic ring around a central hole and take it off again. At first, it will be easier for a baby to take the rings off, but as the baby's coordination improves, he will be able to put the rings on himself. Later, the child will be able to put the rings on the pole in the correct order, largest to smallest. A homemade ring set can be made with canning jar rings and a paper towel tube.

(Stacking rings help with eye-hand coordination, and develops pre-math skills of graduated differences in size and the order in which things come, called *sequencing*. These toys teach beginning problem solving— skills and cause and effect.)

6-18 Months—Homemade Pull Toy

Tie a wide ribbon around several rattles or other toys the baby likes and show her how to get the toys by pulling on the ribbon. Put the ribbon in her hand and, as she moves her hand, the toys will move and make noise. Help her pull the toys toward her and praise her for catching them.

(Pull toys develop a sense of cause and effect as well as sound discrimination. They help build self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment.)

6-18 Months—Pop Up Toys

Toys that pop up suddenly in response to something the child has manipulated keep babies interested for quite a long time. At first, the baby just likes watching as the parent manipulates the toy. Then the baby may help push the toy back down after it pops up. Later, the baby will enjoy controlling the toy himself. Some toys that pop up very suddenly, like a jack-in-the-box, may frighten babies at certain ages, but they gradually begin to enjoy the surprise. Make a homemade pop-up toy out of a paper cup and a straw. Cut a hole in the bottom of the cup and stick a straw into it. Draw a face on a circle of cardboard and tape it to the top of the straw. Move the straw up and down to make the face pop up and then disappear. Turn the straw to make the face turn from side to side.

(Toys that have something pop up when a child manipulates them in some way teach cause and effect, and prediction, and they reward anticipation. They also help develop eye-hand coordination. They help the baby develop a sense of *object permanence*—that the object still exists even if the baby can't see it) which, in turn, helps overcome separation anxiety when a parent leaves. This type of toy helps develop self-esteem and a sense of mastery and power.)

6-18 Months—Texture Box

Find a shallow box with a lid, like a gift box for a shirt. Glue textured fabric pieces to the bottom of the box. Use fabrics such as wool, silk, flannel, fake fur, vinyl, corduroy, velvet, felt, netting, or lace. Above each square of fabric, cut a hole in the lid big enough to fit a finger. The parent can hold the baby on his lap or sit on the floor with him. Poke one finger into one of the holes and tell the baby how the fabric feels. Encourage him to put his finger in the hole and describe the texture he feels.

(Feeling different textures stimulates the sense of touch and develops texture discrimination. It teaches comparisons, fosters eye-hand coordination, and builds vocabulary.)

6-18 Months—Texture Drop Box

Cover an empty square tissue box with contact paper. Trace the shape of baby food jar lids on different types of fabric. Cut them out and glue them to the insides of the lids. Put the lids in the box and shake it. Take one out at a time and let the baby feel the texture. Talk about how it feels. Encourage her to reach in and take out more lids. When the box is empty, show her how to drop a lid back into the box.

(Feeling different textures stimulates the sense of touch and develops texture discrimination. It teaches comparisons. Talking about the textures builds vocabulary. When features such as reaching in, pulling out, and fitting a lid back into a box are involved; eye-hand coordination is fostered.)

6-18 Months—Big Box

Cut big holes in a large cardboard box and put it on the floor to allow the baby to crawl in and out of it.

(Encourages the baby to explore her environment, fosters vocabulary, and helps the baby understand spatial concepts such as “in” and “out.” It helps the baby understand his own “body space”—where he will fit and spaces he can’t go through.)

6 Months-5 Years—Gonna Get You and Chase

As a baby learns to crawl away, she loves to have adults chase and catch her. The parent can start the game by smiling and saying, “I’m gonna get you,” and start to crawl or walk toward the baby. Continue saying, “Gonna get you,” as you get closer. When the parent catches the baby he can pick her up and give her a kiss, a little tickle, or blow on her tummy. Keep the game very gentle and don’t startle or frighten the baby. Then put the baby down and start the game over. Often the baby will squeal with delight when caught. As the child gets older, the parent can play chase with her, alternating the roles of “chaser” and “chasee.”

(Part of the fun of being chased for the baby is the understanding that comes from repeating a familiar game. The baby learns that she can initiate a game by crawling or running away and knows what the parent will do when the parent catches her. This game helps the baby learn to anticipate what comes next. It is a loving way to help a baby develop courage. Chase games help the child feel empowered. As the parent slows down so the child can catch him or pretends to be “running” to catch the child; the child delights in the thought that they can run faster, jump higher, and hide better than the parent. This comparison of the child’s coordination and chasing skills to the adult’s helps build self confidence for the child and gives her a sense of power and control. Self-confidence and a sense of personal power are extremely important to healthy emotional development for a child.)

9-18 Months—Pushing and Pulling

Babies need encouragement to take a step after they learn to pull themselves up to their feet. They need time to strengthen their leg and back muscles before they can walk. One way to give babies practice is to let them stand and hold onto something like a laundry basket or a sturdy wheeled toy. When the baby has a good grip, the parent slowly pulls the basket or toy as she takes a step forward. The baby may enjoy pushing the basket or toy as the parent pulls it. Often older toddlers love to push their own stroller.

(Gentle pushing and pulling exercises help develop balance and large muscle coordination as well as strengthening the back, legs, and joints.)

9 Months-5 Years—Baby Ball Play

Balls are a great toy for babies and young children at various ages. They can help introduce babies to the delight of social interaction with others. Before a baby actually can catch, toss, or kick a ball, he will enjoy being held by a parent and swung so that his feet hit or “kick” a soft ball like a beach ball. The parent can even set up a target or basket on the floor and move the baby around so that the ball is “kicked” toward the goal. Older children or adults can get involved to make it a real team effort by rolling the ball to the baby “kicker” while the parent holds the baby.

As the baby matures, additional games with balls can be added that involve catching, tossing, and holding a ball. A baby learns to catch before he learns to throw. At about two years, a child can sit and toss or roll a beach ball or other soft ball back and forth to another person. It is easier for a child to sit when learning to toss and catch because he doesn’t have to worry about balance at the same time. All ball play with babies and young children should be done gently and with soft balls that will not hurt if the child is hit in the face or head.

At about two and a half, when a child can toss a ball, variety can be added to ball play by putting out a bucket, tub of water, or small swimming pool. The child will enjoy the splash the ball makes when it lands in the water. A small parachute can add to the fun of ball play at this age, especially if several children are together. A soft ball or several small balls can be placed on the parachute and bounced up and down as the children shake the edges of the parachute.

Typically children do not have the coordination to dribble a ball until they are about four years old, but there are always exceptions. Before a child can bounce a ball repeatedly with one hand, he will need practice bouncing and catching a ball over and over with both hands.

(Ball play at various ages helps develop eye-hand and eye-foot coordination and strengthens large muscles. Ball play helps develop control of reflexes, spatial awareness and good timing. Ball play

promotes social interaction, appreciation for non-competitive games, and develops a beginning understanding of “game rules” and taking turns.)

9-12 Months—Knock Me Over

A baby may not have the coordination to stack blocks or plastic kitchen containers on top of each other, but she loves to knock over stacks that the parent makes for her. Make sure the toys or containers used to make a tower will not hurt the baby if they fall back on her when she pushes them over. As her coordination improves she will be able to stack objects herself. Knocking objects over gives the child a sense of mastery and power which helps develop self-confidence.

(This activity teaches the baby about cause and effect and basic concepts about size. It also helps develop large and small muscles.)

9 Months-5 Years—Boxes

When a baby can crawl or toddle around easily, he may find a large cardboard box or fabric tunnel very exciting. He may go in and play peek-a-boo or just enjoy going in and out. As the baby matures, the boxes can get bigger. Three-to five-year-olds often enjoy playing imaginary games in a stove or refrigerator box. They may make cars or a train out of smaller boxes.

(Going in and out of small spaces helps a baby develop a sense of both body and spatial awareness. He becomes aware that he is too big to fit in some places, but just right for others. Crawling in and out and through interesting spaces helps develop large muscles and stimulates the imagination.)

12-15 Months—Jump Baby Jump!

Wrap an old phone book in duct tape or cover it with contact paper to make it less slippery. Put the book on the floor and let the baby crawl up and over it. Let an older child stand on the book and hold his hand as he jumps off the book to the floor. Encourage him to jump and praise him when he does.

(Jumping helps develop coordination, strengthens large muscles in the legs, builds self-confidence, and courage.)

12 Months-5 Years—Parachute Play

Parachutes are generally more fun to use with several babies and parents at a time for a group play session. Children who can sit by themselves may enjoy being pulled around while sitting on the parachute. Once a child is walking with a fairly good sense of balance, he may enjoy having the parachute held over his head and those of his friends and slowly lowered and raised rhythmically. Adults can sweep the parachute into the air and let go so it floats down over the children. Children and parents can hold onto the edge of the parachute and walk in a circle singing “Ring-Around-the-Rosy.” They fall to the floor at the end with the parachute again floating down on them.

Activities for older toddlers who can retain their balance while shaking the edges of the parachute can include bouncing beach balls or soft smaller balls on the surface of the parachute or crawling under it as it is shaken over their heads.

(This activity challenges a child’s sense of balance, strengthens large muscles, promotes coordination, develops a sense of cause and effect, and fosters the beginnings of group play when several children are involved.)

18 Months-3 Years—Horsie

Parents can begin a game of “horsie” with a toddler by bouncing the child on the parent’s knees or legs. While gently bouncing the child recite a nursery rhyme or sing a bouncing song. As the child gets older and has good balance, the parent can give the child a “ride” on the parent’s back as the parent crawls on hands and knees.

(This bouncing game helps develop a sense of balance and spatial awareness.)

18 Months-5 Years—Build a House, Build a Town

By eighteen months, a toddler will enjoy sitting on the floor and playing with building blocks. There are many different types of blocks. Sponge and soft sculpture blocks are a good choice for a young child

because, if they tumble over, they will not hurt the toddler. As the toddler matures and shows an interest in imaginary play at about two years, suggest building a house. Perhaps add people or animals to the structure. If the child enjoys the game, suggest adding houses for other people and other buildings in the community such as a school, hospital, post office, or police station. Two-year-olds enjoy running cars, trucks, and other vehicles on a path or road, through box tunnels, and over block bridges.

(Blocks encourage imaginative play and improve eye-hand coordination. The shapes form the basis for later understanding of geometric shapes, measurement, balance, and weights. Knocking down blocks provides a healthy outlet for aggression. They give the shy child a sense of power and control over the environment. The child gains a sense of community by adding the people characters and vehicles he sees around him.)

18 Months-5 Years—Writing and Drawing

At about eighteen months, a parent may want to introduce crayons or markers to a child. The child must be past the stage of wanting to put everything in his mouth to use writing and drawing tools. Young children will need parental supervision to help them keep their writing and creative drawing on surfaces that are safe. Large pieces of blank newspaper are an excellent choice, but even a notebook and a pen may help keep a toddler entertained in some situations. Young children tend to grasp the writing tools with all their fingers. This is appropriate for a long time. By about four years, parents can help position a writing tool in a child's hand so the child is using only the thumb and two fingers.

The most appropriate writing tools for most children through kindergarten are "chunky" or oversize pencils, crayons, and markers. However, many children with extremely good small muscle control prefer thinner tools. How a child uses a writing or drawing tool, and what she does with it typically follows a developmental pattern. The first stage is scribbling, and it can last from about eighteen months through age three or so. Gradually the maturity of the child is reflected in what she draws or writes. Reading and writing develop at the same time, so it is important that children have both the tools and time to practice with drawing and writing.

Children need a lot of practice time with writing and drawing tools, just as they need the parent to read many books to them. Other this practice time should allow them to move without constraint. Big paper allows a child to learn to control both large and small muscles needed for drawing and writing. Blank paper is a much better choice than a coloring book. It allows for more creativity, and the child is not frustrated when her drawing does not turn out like the one in the coloring book.

A related tool that children, about age three or four, need to learn to use is scissors. There are many types of safety scissors for children. To teach a child to use scissors, it is often helpful for the parent to pretend the scissors are an animal's mouth and the animal is going to "bite" the paper. Young children usually want to try to shove the scissors through the paper rather than opening and shutting them. The parent encourages the child "to open the scissors' mouth" and "shut his mouth to take a bite." Then repeat, "open his mouth." It is helpful if the parent holds the paper. Using scissors requires the use of both hands and good eye-hand coordination. Once a child knows how to use scissors, they tend to want to practice every chance they get. Many children try to cut their own hair, someone else's, or doll's hair with scissors. Perhaps they have had a haircut and watched an adult cut hair with scissors, and they want to try that.

(Use of drawing and writing tools and scissors all help develop eye-hand coordination and strengthen small muscles in the hands and fingers. Access to crayons, markers, pencils, and chalk are important to help prepare a child for the formal process of writing. Reading and writing develop at the same time and one helps the other, so children need as much time practicing with these tools as they do having books read to them. Experience with writing and drawing tools and cutting with scissors are important school readiness skills a child will need at about age five.)

18 Months-5 Years—Be My Helper

Toddlers enjoy watching parents go through the normal daily routines of caring for a home and car. Children learn by observing adults. They want to be actively involved in the activity and try to imitate what they see their parents doing. Parents can use this natural interest by including tools for the child similar to the ones the parent is using. A parent may be using a feather duster and can offer the toddler one and give them their own spot to "dust." Toddlers may enjoy running their toy vacuum while the parent uses a real one. Parents may allow a toddler to stand next to them as they do dishes and allow the child to wash plastic containers, cups, and spoons, while the adult handles the breakable and sharp items. A toddler

will delight in helping hold the hose to wash the car or carrying his own watering can water flowers. Until a child is about five-years-old, he cannot really be expected to manage assigned “chores” around the house; but he will enjoy helping with many chores.

(“Helping” builds self-confidence and gives children a sense of accomplishment. Helping builds self-esteem, and promotes the development of coordination and large muscle strength. It gives them practice with role playing and helps them identify themselves as part of the family. Involving young children with daily activities also keeps them busy and makes supervision much easier for the parent because the children are right with them doing the same activity. As children mature and understand what responsibility is, they are able to understand they have routine responsibilities at home and in school that they need to do without continual supervision.)

2-5 Years—Pouring Water

Toddlers learn about the principals of water if things like a colander, sieve, turkey baster, and measuring cups and spoons are added to the bathtub or pool. Pouring water remains a favorite activity. He is learning about things being “full” or “empty,” “too much,” and about “fast” and “slow”. His vocabulary develops along with his concept development. Water stimulates his senses. His imagination can be stimulated by making “rain” with a colander. Sprinkling a child with water drops or misting him with a spray bottle may help get him ready to have water sprinkle him from the shower head. Water adds an interesting dimension to sand box play.

(Water play helps a child understand basic science and mathematical principles. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. Pouring improves eye-hand coordination and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another.)

2-5 Years—Sand Play

When a child is old enough to know not to eat sand, they are ready for an activity that can keep them mesmerized for long periods of time. Sand play at a beach or in the back yard, like water play, is very sensual. Many of the same tools are used in the sandbox as in a sink or tub—plastic containers, colander, and measuring cups and spoons. Additional equipment might include a shovel and pail, a sifter, spatula to make patterns in the sand, and toy animals and cars to foster imaginary play. Earth moving machine toys are especially popular.

Water adds a wonderful dimension to sand play. It allows the child to explore mixing and consistencies. It helps hold the sand together for molding and building. It also allows a delightful opportunity for messing and getting dirty in a controlled situation.

(Like water play, sand play offers opportunities to explore basic science and math principles. These include a sense of volume, capacity, gravity, estimation, timing, and measurement. It improves eye-hand coordination and helps prepare the child to pour food from one container into another. Using earth moving toys promotes imaginary play and gives children a sense of power and control.)

2-5 Years—Play Dough and Modeling Clay

Play dough is inexpensive and easy to make at home. Modeling clay and any other safe molding medium, including real bread, cookie dough or pie crust, allow child to explore and manipulate a pliable substance. Most young children learn more from simply handling the dough than from “making something” with it. They like to poke and squeeze it, flatten it, and slap it. They may also enjoy rolling it into long strings and snapping it apart. Dough fosters imaginary play.

(Playing with modeling substances strengthens hand and finger muscles. The squeezing, slapping, and pounding involved often helps young children express aggression in an acceptable way and gives them a sense of power and control.)

2-5 Years—Balancing

Hold toddler’s hand while she walks on a low ledge or curb. A toddler may like walking along a two-by-four that is flat on the ground or elevated slightly. A variation on this activity is to put down colored sheets of construction paper and help the toddler step from one to another. Vary the distance so some steps are small and others require a “giant” step.

(Balancing practice improves eye-foot coordination as well as helping develop spatial awareness.)

2-5 Years—Circle Songs and Games

At about age two, a child begins to understand that some games have rules. He enjoys playing with other children, but often does not know how to interact. A parent can teach a child the words and motions to familiar circle songs and games such as “Ring-Around-The-Rosy,” “The Farmer in the Dell,” “London Bridge,” “Mulberry Bush,” and “Pop Goes the Weasel.” He will come to understand what he should do when he joins other children playing a game he recognizes.

(Circle games and songs give children a range of songs to sing to themselves. They enjoy the social companionship of holding hands with other children or adults, and begin to develop an understanding of and appreciation for cooperative play and “game rules.”)

2-5 Years—Dress Up

Dress up clothes and other props help children play out the activities and roles they observe around them. Boys and girls both need to have props and dolls to play house. This helps them understand what mothers and fathers do in a family. Children may enjoy trying on clothes and using tools that adults use when they work—a fire hat and a hose, telephone, computer keyboard and cardboard box monitor. Toy props can help a child create an imaginary situation that frightens them in real life and allows them to feel powerful enough to confront and overcome their fears.

Dress up play stimulates the imagination of children. It helps them play out their experiences in daily life and helps them practice roles as care givers and workers. Dress up play often helps children learn to play interactively with other children.

(Dressing-up helps children work through problems they are having or emotions they are experiencing. An alligator or lion or Superman cape may help children imagine themselves as powerful. They perceive themselves as strong enough to cope and overcome everything that frightens them. This helps many children overcome their fears, develops confidence for a shy child, and allows an aggressive child an outlet that does not hurt anyone.)

2 ½ -5 years—Jumping and Hopping

Jumping and hopping are milestones for toddlers. The child may progress from jumping as the parent holds his hand to jumping unassisted from the bottom of the slide to the ground. As the child matures, the basic skills of jumping and hopping are used for hopscotch, jumping rope, skipping, and other more sophisticated movement.

(Jumping increases the bilateral coordination needed to roll or kick a ball and develops balance.)

FOOD

Suggested Food Books

+ indicates a CCBC Choices book

- Acredolo, Linda, and Susan Goodwyn. 2002. *Baby Signs for Mealtime*. HarperFestival. 0-06-009073-1. Board Book.
- Degen, Bruce. 1995. *Jamberry*. HarperFestival, 1995. 0-604-00651-5. Board Book, also Big Book.
- Ehlert, Lois. 1987. *Growing Vegetable Soup*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 0-15-232581-6. Big Book.
- Fleming, Denise. 1998. *Lunch!* Henry Holt. 0-8050-5696-3. Board Book.
- +Lin, Grace. 1999. *The Ugly Vegetables*. Talewinds/Charlesbridge. 0-88106-336-3.
- Miller, Margaret. 2000. *Baby Food*. Little Simon. 0-689-83190-0. Board Book.
- +Pinkney, Andrea Davis. 1997. *I Smell Honey*. Harcourt Brace. 0-15-200640-0.
- Scratch and Sniff Food*. 1999. D. K. Publishing. 0-7894-3988-3. Board Book, scratch and sniff.
- Van Laan, Nancy. 2001. *Tickle Tum*. Atheneum. 0-689-83143-9. Board Book.
- Wells, Rosemary. 1998, originally published 1985. *Max's Breakfast*. Dial. 0-8037-2273-7. Board Book.
- Wells, Rosemary. 1998, originally published 1979. *Max's First Word*. Dial. 0-8037-2269-9. Board Book.

Suggested Recorded Music for Food

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Pat-A-Cake," "Pease Porridge Hot," and "To Market To Market."
- Palmer, Hap. 1984. *Baby Song* Backyard Productions. B00004TVSG. CD with words. See "Sitting In A High Chair."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDL. Cassette with words. See "Pat-A-Cake," "I'm a Little Teapot."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Finger Foods."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi in Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "Apples and Bananas."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-3. CD with words. See "Aikendrum" and "Peanut Butter Sandwich."

Suggested Props for Food Story Time

- Toy foods
- Real foods, especially fruits and vegetables
- Toy dishes, pots, pans, silverware
- Soft-sculpt vegetables and fruits (Battat brand is available through Lakeshore Learning Materials.)
- Baby bottles
- Tippy cups
- Baby doll
- Toy animals

Extended Program Ideas for Foods

***Lunch!* by Denise Fleming**

After reading this story, put on a mouse puppet and have him pretend to eat the following toy foods: turnip, carrots, corn, peas, blueberries, grapes, apple, and watermelon. The librarian can either feed the mouse, let him pick up his own food, or let the children feed him. Talk about the colors of the food as they are named and describe them. This book offers good practice with both food and color names.

***Baby Signs for Mealtime* by Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn.**

As the book is read, the parents can make the hand sign for that food for the babies and help toddlers make the sign. Hold up each food and encourage the children and parents to show the sign.

***Scratch and Sniff Food* by Dorling Kindersley Publishing**

Have each parent hold the book, read a page, and pass it, so the babies and toddlers can each sniff the pages. Talk about the foods and hold up toy samples or the real thing as the book is passed. Follow up by sniffing real foods. If several copies of the book can be purchased, or enough for each parent and child pair, it will make passing it easier or unnecessary.

***Tickle Tum* by Nancy Van Laan.**

Read some of the rhymes in this book several times, for the sheer joy of hearing them more than once.

Counting, Matching, and Sorting Toy Foods

Put out an assortment of toy foods for each child. Have the parents talk about them and sort them by color or shape. They can be counted. No more than three pair are appropriate for two-year-olds for a matching game. For two-to-three year-olds, five things are plenty to count unless the child is very good at counting.

Sniffing

Real foods with easily recognizable smells can encourage even babies to use their sense of smell—cantaloupe, strawberries, lemon, orange, etc.

Group Game—Toss It in the Pot

Soft-sculpted or plastic foods can be dropped or tossed into a large soup kettle (a canning pot works well) or a box covered to look like a soup pot to practice letting go of objects and throwing. Both improve coordination. Naming foods, counting them, and discussing colors can all be involved.

Art Projects—Fruit and Vegetable Collage

Let toddlers glue pictures of fruit or vegetables on a piece of construction paper to make a collage. Stamp with fruits and vegetables. Make a hole in a tag board apple shaped and let the child put his finger through the hole to become the worm. Draw eyes and a smile on the child's finger. Toddlers can add eyes and a mouth to an egg shape to make Humpty Dumpty.

Suggested Food Fingerplays, Song and Poems

“Pat-a-Cake”

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake,

(Infants—Parent helps baby clap hands.)

Baker's man.

Bake me a cake

As fast as you can.

Roll it, and toss it,

(Infants—Parent rolls baby's hands and raises them in the air.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to roll hands then to toss them into the air.)

And mark it with “B”

(Infants—Parent prints the letter “B” on the baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent help child's finger trace a “B” in the air.)

And put it in the oven

(Infants—Parent extends baby's hands in front of body.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make motion to put

cake in oven.)

For Baby and me.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent hugs baby.)

Clapping hands is quite an accomplishment for babies and is often one of the first games babies learn to play. Toddlers can build on the basics by adding the rolling and tossing motions.

“Humpty Dumpty”

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.

(Infants—Parent holds baby in sitting position.)

(Toddlers—Parent seats child facing forward on his lap.)

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

(Infants—Parent dips baby gently.)

(Toddlers—Parent slides the child down his legs holding her hands.)

All the king’s horses

(Infants—Parent shakes head “no”.)

(Toddlers—Parent holds up left hand and then right on each side.)

And all the king’s men

Couldn’t put Humpty together again.

But I can!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent brings the child back into upright position.)

Young children do not understand that Humpty is an egg. It is a good time to talk about eggs and how they break open. The “dropping” motion helps children understand the concept of falling. The new ending can give children confidence that Mom or Dad can fix most things that go wrong in their lives and helps build a sense of trust and security. Give the children plastic eggs to drop several times.

“Sing a Song of Sixpence”

Sing a song of sixpence,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sways in time to the rhythm of the poem.)

A pocketful of rye.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent covers or wraps child lightly in a blanket, covering head.)

Four and twenty blackbirds

Baked in a pie.

When the pie was opened,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent opens blanket suddenly and acts surprised.)

The birds began to sing.

Now wasn’t that a dainty dish

To set before the King?

The king was in his counting-house

(Infants—Parent gently squeezes each of baby’s fingers.)

Counting out his money.

(Toddlers—Parent helps hold up one finger at a time.)

The queen was in the parlor

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to feed child and lick fingers.)

Eating bread and honey.

The maid was in the garden

(Infants—Parent lifts baby into the air and gently swings him back and forth.)

Hanging out the wash.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to hang up wash on clothesline.)

Along came a blackbird

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to shoo away birds then gently “snips” the child’s nose and pretends to take it.)

And snipped off her nose!

“Hey Diddle Diddle”

Hey diddle, diddle

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s arms in imitation of playing a fiddle.)

The cat and the fiddle.

(Toddlers—Parent imitates fiddle playing and encourages child to make the motions.)

The cow jumped over the moon.

(Infants—Parent lifts child high to “jump over the moon.”)

(Toddlers—Parent takes child’s hand and jumps in place.)

The little dog laughed to see to see such a sight.

(Infants—Parent giggles for baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent covers mouth and laughs.)

And the dish ran away with the spoon.

(Infants—Parent runs a few steps with the child.)

(Toddlers—Parent holds child’s hand and they run off together.)

Talk about a spoon, fork, knife, dish, cup, and bowl. Let the children handle child-sized versions, or toy dishes.

“Little Jack Horner”

Little Jack (Jill) Horner

(Infants—Parent seats baby on lap and pretends to feed him.)

Sat in a corner

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to feed child.)

Eating his holiday pie.

(Infants—Parent pretends to put the baby’s thumb into a pie, and then kisses or nibbles the baby’s thumb.)

(Toddlers—Parent holds child’s thumb, imitates sticking it into a pie and pulling it out. Then hugs child and tells him what a good child he is.)

He put in his thumb,

And pulled out a plum

And said, “What a good boy (girl) am I.”

(Infants—Parent hugs and kisses baby.)

“Two Red Apples”

Two red apples high in the tree.

(Infants—Parent raises one of the baby’s arms over head and then the other.)

(Toddlers—Point up in the air.)

Two red apples smiled down at me.

(Infants—Parent smiles at baby.)

(Toddlers—Hold up two fingers.)

It climbed that tree as fast as I could.

(Infants—Parent gently moves the baby’s arms up and down in a climbing motion.)

(Toddlers—Pretend to climb the tree.)

Down came the apples.

(Infants—Parent makes chewing motions.)

Mmmm were they good!

(Toddlers—Pretend to pick and eat the apples.)

(Infants—Parent smiles and rubs the baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent smiles and helps child rub his tummy.)

This rhyme helps children understand that some foods come from trees and helps them use their bodies to understand the concept of "high."

"Pancake"

Mix a pancake, stir a pancake,

(Infants—Parent moves baby's arm in stirring motion.)

(Toddlers—Parent models stirring for child.)

Pop it in the pan.

(Infants—Parent gently pokes the baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child clap his hands.)

Fry a pancake, toss a pancake.

(Infants—Parent gently rocks baby from side to side.)

(Toddlers—Parent imitates flipping motions with a spatula.)

Catch it if you can!

(Infants—Parent picks up baby and kisses her.)

(Toddlers—Parent catches child up and kisses her.)

"Pease Porridge Hot"

Pease porridge hot.

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands in time with the rhyme.)

Pease porridge cold.

(Toddlers—Parent claps hands against the child's hands in time with the rhyme as child sits on parent's lap.)

Pease porridge in the pot.

(Infants—Parent gently covers the baby's head and face with a blanket as if putting a lid on a pot.)

(Toddlers—Parent opens legs and lets child fall slightly downward as if going into a pot.)

Nine days old.

(Infants—Parent uncovers baby's face.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up nine fingers.)

Some like it hot.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent blows on back of child's neck.)

Some like it cold.

(Infants—Parent wraps baby in the blanket.)

(Toddlers—Parent cuddles child as if it is cold outside.)

Some like it in the pot.

(Infants—Parent gently covers the baby's face again with the blanket.)

(Toddlers—Parent opens legs and lets child fall slightly downward as if going into a pot.)

Nine days old.

(Infants—Parent uncovers baby's face and kisses baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child raise nine fingers.)

“I’m a Little Teapot”

I’m a little teapot

(Infants—Parent holds the baby in the air or holds the baby on the parent’s lap.)

(Toddlers—Parent stands with the child or places child on her lap.)

Short and stout.

(Infants—Parent squats down and then back up again with baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to indicate “short” and “stout” with hands.)

Here is my handle.

(Infants—Parent holds up one of the baby’s arms and then the other.)

Here is my spout.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a handle of first one arm and then makes a spout with the other.)

When I get all steamed up,

(Infants—Parent stands on tip toe.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child stand on tip toe.)

Then I shout—

(Infants—Parent dips baby to one side then back upright again.)

Just tip me over and pour me out!

(Toddlers—Parent helps child bend to one side..)

There is some good vocabulary practice in this rhyme. The “tipping” helps babies and toddlers develop their balance. Let toddlers practice pouring water from a toy tea pot into a cup.

“Peanut Butter”

A peanut sat on the railroad track.

(Infant—Parent holds up one of the baby’s fingers.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up one finger.)

His heart was all a flutter.

(Infants—Parent taps baby’s chest near heart.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to pat chest over heart with open hand.)

Along came a train—the 5:15.

(Infant—Parent gently moves baby’s arms in circular chugging motion.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to chug his own arms.)

Toot! Toot! Peanut Butter!

(Infants—Parent raises baby’s arm to pull train whistle.)

(Toddlers—Parent demonstrates raising arm to pull whistle.)

The “chugging” motion in this rhyme is one that is often used to represent a train and can become a baby sign for “train.” The variety of motions involved helps a child develop rhythm and coordination.

“Going Shopping”

Come to the store with me

(Infants—Parent places baby on parent’s lap.)

(Toddler—Parent motions for child to come, takes child’s hand, and begins to walk in place.)

Just down the street.

We don’t need a car.

(Infants—Parent pretends to steer the baby from side to side)

We can go on our feet.	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to steer a car, then goes back to walking in place.)</i>
Daddy wants cherries	<i>(Infants—Parent moves baby's feet in walking motion.)</i>
And apples and steak.	<i>(Infant—Parent makes little circles on baby's cheeks and nose.)</i>
Mama wants bread	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child make small circle with the thumbs and pointer fingers on each hand.)</i>
To pop in the oven and bake.	<i>(Infants—Parent makes large circle on the baby's chest or back.)</i>
	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child join the fingers and thumbs from both hands to make a larger circle.)</i>
	<i>(Infant—Parent gently rubs and pats the baby's tummy.)</i>
	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child rub tummy and smack lips.)</i>

Give toddlers toy fruits and vegetables and paper lunch bags and have them put the foods into the bags and take them out again. Talk about each one.

“Criss-Cross Applesauce”

Criss-cross applesauce.	<i>(Infants—Parent draws an X on the baby's back as the baby sits on the parent's lap.)</i>
Spiders crawling up your spine.	<i>(Toddlers—Parent makes a large X on the child's back.)</i>
Cool breeze.	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks fingers up the child's back.)</i>
Makes you get the sillies.	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently blows on the back of the child's neck.)</i>
	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently tickles child for just a moment.)</i>

This rhyme and activity are often used to make a child who is crabby or upset smile again. It helps make children aware of their backs which they can feel but not see.

“Curly Locks, Curly Locks”

Curly Locks, Curly Locks, Will you be mine?	<i>(Infants—Parent kisses baby's head or hair.)</i>
You shall not wash dishes	<i>(Toddlers—Parent pats hair and fluffs it, and then pats and fluffs the child's hair.)</i>
Nor feed the swine. But sit on a cushion And sew a fine seam	<i>(Infants—Parent pretends to wash baby's tummy or face.)</i>
And sup upon strawberries,	<i>(Toddlers—Parent pretends to wash dishes and hands them to child to dry.)</i>
	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent makes pig noises.)</i>
	<i>(Infants—Parent pretends to sew baby's tummy with a needle and thread.)</i>
	<i>(Toddlers—Parent models how to pretend to sew with a needle and thread.)</i>
	<i>(Infants—Parent pretends to put a strawberry in</i>

Sugar, and cream.

baby's mouth.)

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to pick up a strawberry, dips it in sugar and cream, shakes off the excess, pops it in the child's mouth, and dabs lips with an imaginary napkin.)

If possible allow toddlers to wash toy dishes.

“Veggies”

Use the melody from “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star”

Veggies, veggies, I like these,

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands in time to the song, or peddles baby's legs.)

Carrots, squash and even peas.

(Toddlers—Parent gently pokes the child in different places as each food is named.)

Potatoes, beans and corn so good,

Do you eat veggies? Well, you should!

Give me veggies all day, please.

I'll eat them all

I'll even try some lima beans!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent rubs child's tummy.)

Adapted and used by permission from Simple Super Story Times Programming Ideas for Ages 3-6 by Maria Castellano (Upstart Books, 2003.)

Let toddlers handle different types of toy or real vegetables. The children can put the vegetables in baskets or lunch bags.

“I Know a Treat”

I know a treat that has a hole.

(Infants—Parent traces the baby's mouth or face in a circular movement.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a circle with index fingers and thumbs.)

As you can plainly see.

Bagel, bagel, bagel

(Infants—Parent rocks baby from side to side.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a large circle in the air with child's pointer finger.)

Save a bite for me!

(Infants—Parent pretends to take a bite of baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to bite a bagel.)

I know a treat that has a hole.

Repeat actions as before.

But where could it be?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent shrugs shoulders, holds hands up, and looks around.)

Yummy, yummy yum!

(Infants—Parent gently rubs baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent models how to rub a tummy.)

Now only the hole is left, can you see?

(Infants—Parent makes a circle with index finger and thumb and then takes the baby's finger and puts it through the hole.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a circle with his index finger and thumb and puts index finger from other hand through the hole.)

Adapted and used by permission from Simple Super Story Times Programming Ideas for Ages 3-6 by Maria Castellano (Upstart Books, 2003.)

Give the toddlers small cardboard bagels and show the children how to stick their fingers through the hole.

“Hot Cross Buns”

Hot cross buns!

(Infants—Parent takes baby’s hands and alternately claps them together and on the baby’s legs or tummy.)

Hot cross buns!

(Toddlers—Parent slaps hands with child’s palms.)

Hot cross buns!

Hot cross buns!

Hot cross buns!

If you have no daughters,

Give them to your sons!

“Sippy Sup”

Sippity sup, sippity sup,

(Infants—Parent pretends to give baby a drink from a cup.)

Bread and milk from a china cup.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to pretend to nibble on bread and sip from a cup with pinky extended in exaggerated fashion.)

Bread and milk from a bright silver spoon.

(Infants—Parent pretends to feed baby from a spoon.)

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to sip from a spoon and smacks lips.)

Made of a piece of the bright silver moon.

(Infant—Parent traces the outline of a round moon on the baby’s face)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to pretend to reach up toward the moon and break off a piece.)

Sippity sup, sippity sup,

(Infants—Parent pretends to give baby a drink from a cup.)

Sippity sup, sippity sup,

(Toddlers—Parent again pretends to sip from a cup and dabs at lips with a pretend napkin.)

Bring sippy cups and other types of cups to the program and talk about them; let toddlers pour water out of the cups.

“Wash the Dishes”

Wash the dishes.

(Infants—Parent pretends to wash the baby.)

Wipe the dishes.

(Toddlers—Parent models washing and wiping dishes for child to imitate.)

Ring the bell for tea.

(Infant—Parent holds baby in the air and rocks the baby back and forth like a bell.)

.

(Toddlers—Parent picks child up under the arms and rocks him between the parent’s legs like a bell.)

Three good wishes,

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up three fingers.)

Three good kisses,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent kisses child three times.)

I will give to thee.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles and taps child on the nose.)

Bring toy dishes to the session and let toddlers pretend to wash and dry the dishes or, if possible, allow the children to wash the dishes in water.

“Fruit Salad Song”

Sing to the tune of “Old MacDonald”

I’m cutting up the fruit.

(Infants—Parent pretends to chop baby’s body as if the baby was a fruit.)

I’m cutting up the fruit.

(Toddlers—Parent models cutting motion for child to imitate.)

Hi, ho the derri-o,

I’m cutting up the fruit.

YUM, YUM, YUM!

(Infants—Parent rubs baby’s tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child rub his tummy.)

This activity can be done with real, plastic or soft-sculpture toy fruits. When a song like this is sung when preparing food, it helps build anticipation for the finished product and may encourage a child to try a new food. If food is allowed in the program, cut up fruits and mix them together. Talk about the colors, shapes, and smells. Let the children put some of the salad in a small baggie to take home.

“Finding an Egg”

“Hallando Un Hevo”

(ah-lan’-doe oon wave’-oh)

This little boy found an egg.

*Este niño halló un huevo.
(ay’-stay neen’-yo ah’-yo un
wave’-oh)*

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent wiggles each finger in turn.)

This one cooked it.

*Este lo coció.
(ay’-stay low co-seen’-no)*

This one peeled it.

*Este lo peló.
(ay’-stay low pay’-low)*

This one salted it.

*Este le hechó la sal.
(ay’-stay lay hay-cho’ la saul)*

This fat little one ate it.

*Este gordo chaparrito se lo
comió.
(ay’-stay gor-doe’ cah-par-ree’-
toe say coe-me-oh’)*

He became thirsty.

*Le dió sed.
(lay dee-oh’ said)*

And he went to look for water.

*Y se fué a buscar agua.
(ee say fway a boo-scar’ a’-gwa)*

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent feels with fingers for water first at the elbow, then the shoulder, and ends by tickling the child under the arm.)

He looked and looked

*Buscó y buscó
(booz-koe’, booz-koe’)*

And here he found it!

*¡Y aquí halló!
(ee ah-key’, ah-yo’)*

And drank and drank

Y tomó y tomó y tomó.

and drank. (ee toe-moe', ee toe-moe', ee toe-moe')

Touching and naming body parts help develop vocabulary as well as awareness of body parts. This rhyme is familiar in several Latin American countries

“Little Tortillas”

“Tortillas”

(tor-tea'-yahs)

Little tortillas for
Mama.

Tortillitas para Mamá.
(tor-tea'-yahs par-a' mama)

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands.)

Little tortillas for Papa.

Tortillitas para Papá.
(tor-tea'-yahs par-a' papa)

(Toddlers—Parent claps hands as they say the rhyme as if making tortillas.)

The burned ones for
Mama.

Las quemaditas para Mamá.
(lahs kay-ma-dee'-tas par-a' mama)

(Infants—Dip baby to the left and then right.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to put tortillas in one pile to the left and then to the right.)

The good ones for
Papa.

Las bonitas para Papá.
(lahs böw-knee'-tas par-a' papa)

Repeat and substitute
the children's names
for “Mama” and
“Papa.”

“Corn Tortillas”

“Tortillas”

(tor-tea'-yahs)

This is a second version of the same rhyme. This comes from many countries in Latin America.

Corn tortillas, corn
tortillas.

Tortillitas de manteca.
(tor-tea'-yahs day man-tay'-ca)

(Infants—Parent claps baby's hands as if making tortillas.)

Corn tortillas for my
mommy.

pa' mamá que está contenta.
(pa mama kay ay-sta cone-ten'-ta)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pat hands together as if making tortillas.)

Flour tortillas, flour
tortillas.

Tortillitas de salvado.
(tor-tea'-yahs day sal-va'-doe)

Flour tortillas for my
daddy.

pa' papá que está enojado.
(pa papa kay ay-sta en-oh-ha'-do)

*This activity imitates the hand motions needed to pat out a tortilla. Tortillas are made of flour or corn and are food staples in many Latin American countries. Tostadas, tacos, nachos, and chips are made from corn tortillas. Burritos, chimichangas, and sopapillas are made from flour tortillas. This rhyme offers practice in the patting motions used to make a tortilla, promotes eye-hand coordination, and helps develop a sense of rhythm. Music for this rhyme can be found in *Los Pollitos Dicen/The Baby Chicks Sing* by Kay Choraó. Little, Brown and Company, 1994.*

“Ring Around The Potato”

“Al Corro de la Pañafa”

Ring around the
potato.

Al corro de la pañafa.
(ahl cor-roe' day la pa-ta'ta)

(Infants—Parent carries baby and walks in a circle.)

(Toddlers—Parents and children walk in a circle holding hands.)

Eating salad greens with tomato.	Comeremos ensalada. (coe-mer-ay'-moes en-sa-la'-da)	
Like the gentle people eat.	Como comen los señores. (coe-moe' coe-men' los seen-your'-eez)	
Eating citrus fruits so sweet.	Naranjitas y limones. (nar-an-yea'-tas ee lim-oh'-neez)	
To the ground, to the ground.	¡Achupé, achupé! (ah-chew-pay', ah-chew-pay')	(Infants—Parent dips baby toward floor.)
We all fall down!	Sentadita me quedé. (sen-ta-dee'-ta may kay-day')	Toddlers—Parents and children sit down quickly on the floor.)

The music for this rhyme can be found in *Los Pollitos Dicen/The Baby Chicks Sing* by Jay Choroa. Little, Brown and Company, 1994. This game is played like “Ring-Around-the-Rosy.”

“Sawdust Song”
from *Puerto Rico*

“Aserrín, Aserrán”
(ah-ser-rin', ah-ser-ran')

Sawdust sings, sawdust sings,	Aserrín, aserrán (ah-ser-rin', ah-ser-ran')	(Infants—Parent rocks baby back and forth.)
In the woods of Old San Juan.	Los maderos de San Juan. (lowz ma-der'-ohs day san wan)	(Toddlers—Parent pushes child on swing or sways back and forth with him.)
John eats bread, if you please.	Los de Juan comen pan. (lowz day wan coe'-men pahn)	(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to nibble child.)
Peter only gets some cheese.	Los de Pedro comen queso. (lowz day pay-dro' coe'-men key'-so)	
Happy Henry sucks his candy,	Los de Enrique, alfeñique (lows day en-ree'-kay al-fen'-ee-kay)	(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to suck or lick child's thumb.)
Almonds spun with sugar candy.	¡Ñique, ñique, ñique! (knee-kay', knee-kay', knee-kay')	

“Chocolate Rhyme”

“Rima de Chocolate”
(ree'ma day cho-coe-la'tay)

One, two, three—cho	Uno, dos, tres, cho (uno doe-z trace-choe)	(Infants and Toddlers—Parent counts three fingers each time and says a syllable on the fourth.)
One , two, three—co	Uno, dos, tres, co (uno doe-z trace coe)	
One, two, three—la	Uno, dos, tres, la (uno doe-z trace la)	
One, two, three—te	Uno, dos, tres, te (uno doe-z trace-tay)	
Stir, stir the chocolate.	Bate, bate, chocolate. (ba'-tay, ba'-tay, choe-coe'-la-tay)	(Infant and Toddlers—Parent rubs the child's palms together as if they were rubbing the handle of a wooden spoon or chocolate mixer between them.)

The music for this rhyme can be found in *Los Pollitos Dicen/The Baby Chicks Sing* by Kay Choroa. Little, Brown and Company, 1994. This rhyme offers beginning practice in counting and helps establish a sense of rhythm. For children who know what a molinillo (mol-in-nee'-yo) is, (a wooden kitchen utensil used to stir hot chocolate and to make it foam) this offers practice in imitating food preparation.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Food—"Here's a Cup," "Nibble My Head"

Nature—"Little Miss Muffet"

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Foods

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-6 Months—Bottle Socks

Cover the baby's bottle with a fuzzy sock to give him something new to hold as he nurses. Describe how the sock feels as he touches it. Vary the textures with other soft fabrics.

(This activity provides sensory stimulation and encourages bonding.)

3-15 Months—Book Sandwiches

Cut out pictures of food and put them inside plastic resealable lunch bags. Tape the sealed ends together to make a book out of the pictures. Let the baby turn the pages and talk about any food that seems to catch her attention. Say the name and describe it. Use different food themes or put bread in the first and last baggie and foods that might go into a sandwich in between. Talk about what goes in a sandwich as she looks through the book. Sandwich fixings might include butter or mayonnaise, luncheon meats, lettuce, pickles, onions, olives, tomatoes, or maybe peanut butter, jelly, bananas, or raisins.

(Encourages eye-hand coordination, page turning skills, vocabulary development, promotes nutritious eating habits, and an interest in a variety of foods.)

6-9 Months—In the Pot and Out of the Pot

Pots and pans make good toys for babies. Sit with the baby on the floor and put out some cooking pots and baby toys. Put a toy in a pot, and take it out and explain what you are doing. "Now the corn is in the pot. Now the corn is out of the pot." Let the baby try putting toys in and out and describe what he is doing as he does it. Then turn a pot upside down and put a toy under it. Ask him where the toy is and then lift the pot and show it to him.

(Problem solving and observation help make complicated neural circuits; the more of these connections the better. The baby is probably too young yet to understand that when the toy is out of sight it is still there, so the baby may not turn over the pot to find the toy just yet.)

6-9 Months—Bang the Drum

Pots and pans also make good drums. Give the baby a wooden spoon and show her how to hit pot that is turned over to make a sound. Praise the baby's efforts. Turn the pot right side up and show the baby how to use the wooden spoon to stir inside the pan or to hit the sides of the pan.

(This develops small muscles in the hand and helps the baby practice eye-hand coordination. It also fosters listening skills and a sense of rhythm.)

6-9 Months—Gonna Eat You Up!

Babies love to have Mom or Dad pretend to nibble on them. Nibble on body parts named in rhymes and songs, smack lips, or pretend to chew. Stop if the baby doesn't like the game.

(Songs, poems, and fingerplays all help develop language skills long before the baby can actually talk. Some provide naming practice of body parts as well as of foods.)

6-9 Months—Finger Food Fun

When a baby is old enough to manage finger food, put contrasting colors or textures on the baby's tray such as green peas and orange carrots.

(Allowing a baby to feed himself develops eye-hand coordination skills. It also allows her to make choices and to have some control over the world around her. This helps prevent struggles between parent and child over food as he gets older.)

6-15 Months—Food Magnets

Buy some large refrigerator magnets in the shape of foods or cut out pictures of food. Glue the pictures to cardboard and securely glue a magnet to the back of the picture. Put these magnets low on the refrigerator so that the baby can see, touch, and manipulate them during play time. It may be helpful to only put out the magnets when the parent is trying to make a meal. The magnets may interest the baby and keep him busy while the parent cooks. Talk about the foods the parent is using or the magnets as the food is being prepared. Or, let the baby play with them on a cookie sheet and name and talk about each one as she touches them.

(This is a good food-naming exercise and helps develop eye-hand coordination.)

12-15 Months—Where Is the Strawberry?

Put out about three or four toy food items or real foods and ask the baby “where is the strawberry?” Point to the correct food if she is not able to identify the correct food item. Talk about that food, how it tastes, and perhaps teach the baby the hand sign for it. Pretend to eat the food, smack lips, and talk about how good the food tastes. To vary the game, put one of the food items inside a box with a lid and ask her where it is. Show her how to take off the lid to find it. Add a second box to the game as it gets easier for her.

(This activity helps the baby associate a name with an object, promotes vocabulary development, and encourages an interest in trying new foods.)

12-15 Months—Yum, Yum

As a snack is prepared, make up a song about the food being used or sing the following song to the tune of “Old MacDonald,” substituting the food names for the ones being used.

I’m cutting up the peach.
I’m cutting up the peach.
Hi, ho the derri-o,
I’m cutting up a peach. YUM, YUM!
(Child’s name) has a slice of peach
A slice of peach, a slice of peach.
(Child’s name) has a slice of peach.
Now put it on the plate!

(Cooking together helps the child focus on the process of preparing food and helps build anticipation for the finished foods.)

18-24 Months—Watch Me Eat It Up

The parent sits with the toddler so that they can both look in a mirror as they eat some finger food. Talk about how the front teeth bite and the back teeth chew. The parent can demonstrate how to “take a lick” using only the tongue. The parent can talk about swallowing. When the food is gone, the session can end with the parent and child brushing their teeth while looking in the mirror.

(Looking in a mirror while eating helps the child with body awareness, and he learns more about his mouth and the eating process.)

2-3 Years—Hello, Banana? This is Apple

Put out some fruit or toy food items and a toy telephone. Hold up one of the food items and pretend it is talking on the phone. Make up a conversation for it.

“Hello. Oh hi, Apple. This is Banana. How are you? Oh, I’m sorry to hear that you are lonesome. Who do you want to come over and play with you? You want Cherry and me to come over? OK, I’ll call Cherry and tell him.” “Hello, Cherry? This is Banana. I am calling because Apple is lonely and wants you and me to come over and play. Do you want to go over there right now? OK, I’ll come and pick you up. Good-bye.”

Move the banana and cherry over next to the apple and continue the game with other foods. Encourage the child to make up the game. Suggest one of the foods is sick and ask the child what could be wrong with her. Ask the child what game the fruits want to play.

(This activity encourages imitation of other people, develops an interest in spoken language and communication, encourages imagination, and provides practice with social skills as well as telephone etiquette.)

2 1/2-5 Years—Sniffing

Gather some foods that have strong odors such as oranges, lemon, cantaloupe, popcorn, mild onions, and pleasant spices like cinnamon. Encourage the child to sniff each food and talk about how it smells. Be cautious with things like onions that can make eyes water. To make the game more challenging, invite the child to put a blindfold on her eyes or ask her to cover her eyes with her hands. Let her sniff a food and praise her if she guesses what it is. Invite her to taste some of the foods, especially new foods. When grocery shopping, parent and child can stop and sniff some of the fresh vegetables and fruits. A parent can take the child to an ethnic grocery store such as one specializing in Asian or Mexican foods and look at, name, talk about, and sniff fresh foods that are new to the child. Talk about restaurant smells when driving or going for a walk near a bakery, hamburger stand, or popcorn store.

(Sniffing develops the sense of smell and fosters sensory discrimination. It also promotes language and vocabulary development. It may encourage children to try new foods.)

2-5 Years—The Picnic Basket

Put out a picnic basket and some real or toy food and other things needed for a picnic. Include foods the child does not like. Start a story by explaining that a little boy and his dad were going on a picnic. The dad opened the picnic basket and put in a table cloth and some paper plates. As the various items are named, put each one into the basket. Continue the story by saying, "Then the little boy put in some_____." Let the child suggest something to put into the basket. Allow the child to make choices. Guide the child by suggesting that he should put in something to drink, or since there are already some cookies and fruit in the basket, maybe a sandwich is needed. Allow the child to decide what type of sandwich to put into the basket. This is a good chance to talk about the types of foods needed to balance a meal—fruits, vegetables, dairy, protein, bread, or grains.

(This game stimulates the imagination and gives the child a sense of power as he makes decisions about what to include. It also teaches the elements of good nutrition.)

GETTING DRESSED

Suggested Getting Dressed Books

+Indicates CCBC Choices Book

- +Blos, Joan. 1999. *Hello Shoes!* Simon & Schuster. 0-6898-1441-0.
- Carlstrom, Nancy. 1996. *Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear?* Little Simon. 0-689-80930-1. Board Book.
- Davis, Emma. 2000. *All in a Row, Go to the Zoo.* Millbrook. 1-840-67097-5. Board Book.
- +Hoban, Tana. 1989. *Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe.* Greenwillow. 0-688-06563-5. Board Book.
- Hurwitz, Johanna. 1999. *New Shoes for Silvia.* Mulberry. 0-6881-7115-X.
- London, Jonathan. 1997. *Froggy Gets Dressed.* Viking. 0-670-87616-X. Board Book.
Paperback version 0-14-0544570-7.
- Miller, Margaret. 1989. *Where Does It Go?* Mulberry. 0-6881-5851-X. Board Book.
- Miller, Margaret. 1991. *Whose Shoe?* Greenwillow. 0-688-10008-2.
- +Neitzel, Shirley. 1994. *The Jacket I Wear in the Snow.* Mulberry. 0-688-04587-1.
- Wells, Rosemary. 1998. *Max's New Suit.* Dial/Penguin. 0-8037-2270-2. Board Book.

Suggested Recorded Music for Getting Dressed

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby.* Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD and booklet with words. See "Baby's Clothes" and "One Two Buckle My Shoe."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics.* Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDLD. Cassette with words. See "One, Two Buckle My Shoe."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children.* Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Today I Took My Diapers Off," and "I Can Put on My Clothes by Myself."
- Raffi. 1982. *Raffi Rise and Shine.* Troubadour Records. B0000003HH. Cassette with words. See "Something in My Shoe."

Suggested Props for Getting Dressed Story Time

- Clothes babies and toddlers can try on.
- Clothes and a baby doll or a dressing set like "Froggy."
- Safety mirror (available from numerous sources—Lamaze First Mirror and First Years Musical/Convertible Mirror are two examples).

Extended Program Ideas for Getting Dressed

Mirror Play

Babies of all ages like to look at themselves in the mirror. They will notice when something new is on their head and they see it in the mirror, although they may not recognize their own image. Toddlers love to giggle at themselves when they see their reflection in a mirror wearing something silly.

***Where Does It Go* and *Whose Shoe?* by Margaret Miller or *Hello Shoes!* by Joan Blos**

Any of these books could lead into an activity in which various types of clothing or shoes are brought in, especially those commonly associated with familiar occupations, and the children could try them on and look at themselves in a mirror.

Max's New Suit by Rosemary Wells

This is the perfect book to start an activity that involves intentionally putting clothes on the wrong body parts. The librarian can initiate the game by mis-dressing a model doll. The parents or care givers can then play the game by trying to misplace the clothes on the child.

Group Game—"Baby Shoe Stew"

Parents and toddlers all take off one shoe and put them in a pile, then the child tries to find the shoes that match the ones on the child's and parent's feet.

Art Project—Dress the Dolly

Toddlers can "glue" scraps of fabric to the outline of any piece of clothing if an adult helps them manage an oversized glue stick. Include the outline of a teddy bear or doll and some paper clothes to attach with small pieces of Velcro as a take home activity. For a more involved project, toddlers can make hand prints on fabric or a tee shirt using fabric paint.

Suggested Getting Dressed Plays, Songs, and Poems

"Cobbler Cobbler"

Cobbler, Cobbler mend my shoe.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps child's shoe.)

Get it done by half-past two.

(Infants—Parent taps baby's shoes together twice.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up two fingers.)

'Cause my toe is peeping through.

(Infants—Parent wiggles child's toe.)

(Toddlers—Parent makes fist and pokes a finger from the other hand up and wiggles it.)

Cobbler, Cobbler mend my shoe.

Repeat Actions.

Get it done by half-past two.

Repeat Actions.

Stitch it up and stitch it down,

(Infants—Parent pretends to sew baby's shoe with a needle and thread.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to sew.)

Then I'll give you half a crown.

(Infants—Parent pats the palm of the baby's hand.)

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to put a coin in the child's hand.)

"I Pull on My Boots"

I pull my left boot on my foot.

(Infants—Parent touches each of the baby's feet, first left then right.)

And then I pull my right.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to put on boots, left then right.)

I snap my rain coat up, up, up.

(Infants—Parent walks fingers up baby's tummy and tickles the baby's neck.)

And pull the collar tight, tight, tight.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child imitate snapping a coat and pulling in a collar.)

Over my head I pull my hood.

(Infants—Parent rubs the baby's head from back to front.)

And make sure it's on for good.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child imitate pulling up a hood and tying it.)

I hurry outside very fast

(Infants—Parent runs baby’s legs in a circular motion.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child run in place.)

To wade in the rain

And splash in the puddles, at last.

(Infants—Parent moves baby’s legs as if she is splashing in puddles.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child pretend to splash in puddles.)

On a nice day toddlers can go outside and splash both hands and feet in a bucket of water. Or, water could be poured on the sidewalk for the toddlers to run through and splash. Children might also like to watch how an umbrella goes up and down. If they want to try it, use caution so they do not pinch their fingers. Toddlers love trying on different types and sizes of boots.

“Old Shoes, New Shoes”

Old shoes, new shoes,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps child’s feet together while saying the rhyme.)

Little Goody Two Shoes.

“New Shoes”

New shoes, new shoes

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps child’s feet together as each type of shoe is mentioned.)

Red and pink and blue shoes.

(Toddlers—Parent alternately taps one of the child’s shoes and then the other as each choice is said.)

Tell me which shoes

Do you choose?

Buckle shoes, bow shoe,

Pretty pointed toe shoes.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent taps the child’s toes.)

Sparkly little low shoes.

Which shoes do you choose?

(Infants—Parent kisses the baby’s toes.)

These shoes!

(Toddlers—Parent wiggles the child’s shoes.)

This rhyme can be paired with an activity that involves looking at and talking about different types or sizes of shoes and who wears them.

“Mitten Song”

Thumbs in the thumb place.

(Infants—Parent gently squeezes baby’s thumbs.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up thumbs.)

Fingers all together.

(Infants—Parent gently squeezes fingers of both hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up just the fingers.)

This is the song we sing in mitten weather.

(Infants—Parent sways baby’s hands holding onto the fingers.)

In mitten weather

(Toddlers—Parent and child wave their hands around with only the fingers up.)

It doesn’t matter whether

Mittens are made of wool
Or made of finest leather.
Thumbs in the thumb place,
Fingers all together!

Repeat Actions

Repeat Actions

This song can be followed up with toddlers by helping them put on mittens. In summer time, once the children have mittens on, they can play with ice cubes. Children can also match mitten pairs.

“My Snowsuit”

My zipper suit is bunny brown.

(Infants—Parent says rhyme when dressing baby in a snow suit or pretends to dress baby.)

The top zips up.

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to help child step into a snow suit, feet first then arms, and then zips it.)

The legs zip down.

*(Infants—Parent pretends to zip down legs.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to zip down from knees to feet.)*

I wear it every day.
My daddy brought it out from town.
Zip it up and zip it down.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to zip up suit and zip down legs.)

And hurry out to play.

*(Infants—Parent “runs” baby’s legs.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child run in place.)*

“Zip Zip”

“Zip, zip” goes the zipper.

(Infants—Parent pretends to zip the baby’s jumpsuit or snowsuit.)

As I zip my coat.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child imitate zipping a zipper.)

“Zip, zip,” goes my zipper
From my tummy to my throat.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pats child’s tummy and runs finger up to tickle the child’s throat.)

Toddlers enjoy playing with large unattached zippers that are pinned so they cannot come completely apart. They also like to try zippers attached to boards or on clothes they are not wearing, such as jackets, jeans, shoes, pockets, and purses.

“Put a Piggy in a Poke”

Put a piggy in a poke.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pulls a shirt over the child’s head.)

Put a piggy in a poke.

Zig, zag, zed.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pauses with shirt over the child’s face to say this line.)

Up he comes in a twinkle.

And out pops his head.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent quickly pulls shirt down the rest of the way to expose the child’s head.)

“Cowpoke”

I have a cowpoke’s hat.

(Infants—Parent gently pats baby’s head.)

(Toddlers—Parent pretends to put on a hat so child.)

And shiny cowpoke boots.

(Infants—Parent touches both the baby’s feet.)

(Toddlers—Parent points to child’s feet.)

I have a lasso too.

(Infants—Parent encircles baby’s waist with hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to swing an imaginary rope in a circle over head.)

And a bandana of course.

(Infants—Parent draws finger around baby’s neck.)

(Toddlers—Parent models tying a bandana around the child’s neck.)

I’m ready now.

I will have everything I need

If I can just find a horse!

(Infants—Parent picks up baby and bounces him.)

(Toddlers—Parent looks puzzled and pretends to look for a horse.)

The librarian can bring in the objects mentioned in the rhyme and let the children touch and try on the real items.

“This is the Way We Change a Diaper”

Use melody from “Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush”

This is the way we change a diaper,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent grimaces about smell or holds nose.)

Change a diaper, change a diaper

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to take off the child’s dirty diaper.)

This is the way we change a diaper,

Oh, that really smells!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sniffs and makes a face or holds nose.)

Now we put the clean one on,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to put clean diaper on child.)

The clean one on, the clean one on.

Now we put the clean one on

And baby smells so sweet!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sniffs the diaper, smiles and kisses child.)

Singing to baby during a routine time helps baby and parent bond with each other. A baby doesn’t always want to stay still when he needs to have his diaper changed. He may be more willing to remain still as he recognizes the song. It holds his interest and helps clue him to the diaper-changing process

In the library, this activity can be done with real diapers placed over the child’s clothes just for fun and the giggles it will cause for the parent, care giver, and child. If the toddler is wearing pull-up pants, they can be used instead of a diaper.

“This Is the Way We Wash the Diapers”

Sing to tune of “Mulberry Bush”

This is the way we wash the bib.

(Infants—Parent gently pretends to wash a bib the baby is wearing.)

Wash the bib, wash the bib

(Toddlers—Parent models pushing a bib down into water, swishing, and rubbing it.)

This is the way we wash the bib.

So early in the morning.

These lines are spoken:

Looks clean.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to hold up bib and look at it.)

Smells clean.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sniffs bib.)

Is clean.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to fold and put bib to the side.)

Continue singing:

This is the way we wash the diapers.

(Infants—Parent gently pretends to wash diaper the baby is wearing.)

Wash the diapers, wash the diapers.

(Toddlers—Parent models pushing a diaper down into water, swishing, and rubbing it.)

The first two lines are spoken, the third is sung:

Looks clean.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to hold up diaper and look at it.)

Smells.....OH!

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to smell diaper. Looks surprised at the smell and starts to wash it over again.)

This is the way we wash the diapers...

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent starts the song over again.)

Repeat verse and end with diaper smelling clean.

The parents are more likely to understand the humor in this song, but toddlers love jokes about diapers and will appreciate the parent or care giver's reaction. Real clothes can be used and other clothing items can be added or substituted.

“San Severino”

“San Severino”

(san see-vear-ee'-no)

This version is from Puerto Rico, but this song is popular in other Spanish-speaking countries as well.

San Severino of the happy, happy life.

San Severino de la buena vida, buena vida.
(san see-vear-ee'-no day la boo-way'-na, boo-way'-na vee'-da)

(Infants—Parent swings child's arms and smiles happily.)

San Severino of the happy, happy life.

San Severino de la buena vida, buena vida.
(san see-vear-ee'-no day la boo-way'-na, boo-way'-na vee'-da)

(Toddlers—Parent smiles, holds child's hand, and sways as if walking on a beautiful day.)

Like this, like this, like this.

Así, así, así.
(a-see', a-see', a-see')

The laundress washes the clothes.

hacía la lavandera
(ah-see'-a la la-van-dare-a')

(Infants—Parent rubs the infant's shirt as if washing it.)

She likes to work all day, like this, like this, like this.

Así, así, así
(a-see', a-see', a-see')

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to rub and scrub clothes and hang them on a line to dry.)

She likes to work all day, like this, like this, like this.

Así, así, así
(a-see', a-see', a-see')

I like to do it too, like this.

Así me gusta a mí.
(a-see' may goo'-stah a me)

The music for this song can be found in Diez Deditos/Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

Group Game

“Baby Shoe Stew”

Each toddler and parent takes off one shoe and tosses the shoe into a pile in the center of the circle. Then, with one shoe on, the toddler and parent go to the pile, try to find their own missing shoe, and put it on again.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Bedtime—“Diddle Diddle Dumpling,” “Wee Willie Winkie”
Colors and Counting—“One Two, Buckle My Shoe”

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Getting Dressed

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-3 Months—Soft Textures

New babies like to feel soft textures against their skin. Stroke a baby’s tummy, arms, legs, back, and face with a soft corner of a blanket or piece of clothing. Talk about how soft the fabric feels.

(Stroking the baby promotes bonding between the infant and care giver or parent.)

3-6 Months—Grab It!

At about three or four months, a baby starts to reach out for things she sees. Before that, a baby may kick and wave her hands with excitement when she sees or hears a toy that interests her. To encourage her to reach and take things, shake a colorful piece of clothing in front of the baby so she sees it. Praise and encourage her if she reaches for it.

(This develops eye-hand coordination and eye-tracking skills.)

3-6 Months—Changing Hands

Bring out three clothes items that the baby can easily grasp and are equally interesting to him. Items might include a bib, sock, booty, hat. Put one item in one of his hands and let him hold it for awhile. Then hold out the second item for him. He may reach for it with the same hand that holds the first item. If so, help him open his fingers, drop the first item, and take the second. Or, move the toy in his first hand to the second and help him take the first item with his second hand, then give the new item to him in his first hand. Wait a little while, then offer a third choice. If he doesn’t drop one of the two items he has, gently release the fingers of one of his hands allowing the item in that hand to drop, and then offer him the third item.

(This technique teaches the baby to use both hands, to grasp and release, and to pass things from one hand to the other. All these skills are needed for eye-hand coordination.)

3-6 Months—Squeeze It!

Put bubble wrap in a baby sock and tie it shut. Let the baby squeeze it. Try other textures and things that crackle or squeak. Be sure to take the bubble wrap away when the game is over; it is not safe without adult supervision.

(This activity stimulates the sense of touch and develops texture discrimination, teaches comparisons, fosters eye-hand coordination, and builds vocabulary.)

3-6 Months—Hi Footsie!

Face a mirror with a baby and say, “Who is that? That’s baby. Hi baby.” Then say, “Where is your footsie?” Tug off the baby’s shoe and sock and say, “Here’s your footsie. Hi footsie.” Gently shake his foot as you say “hi.”

(Using short sentences and pausing after a few words helps a baby sort out the sounds of language and helps a baby learn to talk.)

3-18 Months—Texture Books

Collect several different textured fabric scraps such as wool, silk, flannel, fake fur, vinyl, corduroy, velvet, felt, netting, or lace. Cut into small squares and stitch them together with a needle and thread or bind them with tape. With the baby sitting on the lap, move her hand to touch the textured fabrics. Talk about how each piece feels. Let the baby turn the “pages” and stop when one interests her.

(Touching different textures stimulates a baby’s sense of touch, develops tactile discrimination, teaches comparisons, fosters eye-hand coordination, and builds vocabulary.)

6-9 Months—In and Out

Babies often enjoy taking clothing out of a clean laundry basket or low dresser drawer. Sit with the baby on the floor with a basket of clean baby clothes. Take an item out, and then put it back in explaining what is happening. “I take the shirt out of the basket. Now I put it in the basket.” Let the baby try putting the clothes in and taking them out again. Describe what he is doing as he does it. Put a shirt under a blanket or pillow letting a piece stick out so the baby can see it. Ask him where the shirt is and show him how to lift the blanket or pillow to reach the shirt.

(This game teaches observation skills and helps make complicated neural circuits in the baby’s brain. The more of those connections, the better. The baby is probably too young yet to understand that when the shirt is out of sight it is still there, so the baby may look for an object if it is hidden.)

6-12 Months—Home Made Pull Toy

Put a baby shoe or other item of clothing on a blanket near the baby. Show her how to pull the blanket toward her to get the shoe. Praise her efforts.

(This pulling activity and pull toys help a baby develop a sense of cause and effect. They help the baby gain self-confidence and a sense of accomplishment because the baby sees that she can have an impact on the world around her.)

9-18 Months—Pushing and Pulling

Babies need encouragement to take a step after they learn to pull themselves up to their feet. They need time to strengthen their leg and back muscles before they can walk. One way to give babies practice is to let them stand and hold onto something like a laundry basket. When the baby has a good grip, the parent slowly pulls the basket as she takes a step forward. Babies enjoy pushing the basket or toy as the parent pulls it. Often older toddlers love to push their own stroller.

(Gentle pushing and pulling exercises help develop balance and large muscle coordination as well as strengthening the back, leg, and joints.)

18 Months-2 ½ Years—Pockets

Pockets are very interesting to toddlers because they often seem to hold nice surprises. Often a toddler’s clothing does not have a pocket, or it is too small for them to really put their hand inside or to carry things. One solution is to cut a back pocket off a pair of adult blue jeans. Use a diaper safety pin to pin the pocket to the front of the child’s shirt where it is easy for her to look and reach inside. Put favorite toys in the pocket and let him take them out. Encourage him to put things in himself. Ask her, “What do you have in your pocket?” and talk about the object when she shows it to you.

(Reaching inside small spaces helps develop small muscles and eye-hand coordination. Talking about objects with a child promotes vocabulary development.)

18 Month-3 Years—What's In the Purse?

Purses are very high interest items for toddlers. Take a fairly large old purse with a zipper and put a familiar object into it. It could be a pacifier, a bottle, or a favorite toy. Sit with the toddler and slowly unzip the purse to expose a little of the object. Let the child guess what the object is.

(Showing only part of an object to babies and letting them identify the object promotes visual discrimination and the relationship of parts to whole.)

18 Months-5 Years—More Purse Play

Toddlers like to imitate adults. They often are interested in Mom's purse. There always seems to be a treasure in the purse and children love looking into purses and touching things. Children enjoy having their own purse filled with things that might be in a real purse such as a comb, safety mirror, old keys, a notepad and easy grip pencil, an old wallet, tissues, small boxes, and favorite toys. The best purse for toddlers is a beach or canvas bag that has a wide opening, no closure, and only one compartment. This makes it easy for him to look inside. He can see what he wants to take out or he can look in on things as he drops them into the purse. Talk with a child about the objects in the purse. Ask him to find a specific object. As the child gets older he may enjoy a purse that has a zipper, snap, or closure that needs to be turned to open; and one with lots of different compartments.

(Playing with replicas of things adults use encourages imitation and imagination. It also gives children practice with sorting and matching, tactile discrimination, language skills, and small muscle coordination.)

18 Months-5 Years—Mitten or Sock Match

Put out different types of mittens, gloves, and socks. For young children make the difference obvious such as different colors, and only use about three items. Talk about the differences. Then take a single mitten and ask the child to match it to one of those that are already out. Talk about finding the one that is the same. As the child gets older or better at the game, put out singles that are more similar, closer in color shade or pattern, and let the child try again. By about four years of age preschool children can usually be given the task of matching socks as the laundry is done.

(The activity promotes visual discrimination and develops the beginning of classification and comparison skills. Having responsibility for a family chore gives a preschool child a sense of pride and develops self-esteem.)

2-3 Years—Shoe Shop

Gather different types and sizes of shoes. The selection should include baby, toddler, child, and adult sizes for both sexes. Some types might be sneakers, dress shoes, high heels, slippers, water slippers, thongs, sandals, rain or snow boots, cowboy boots, work boots, and different types of sports shoes. The number of pairs depends on the age of the child. If gathering shoes is difficult, the same concept can be done with socks--baby, athletic, dress, knee highs, or those with different patterns.

One game is to put the shoes together in pairs and talk about who wears them and when they are used. Another game is to mix the pairs up and ask the child to find the mate for each one. The parent can ask the child to find shoes that are a certain color. Ask the child to find a pair that daddy wears to work in the garden, or mommy wears to go jogging, or the child wears in the rain.

(Sorting, matching, and classification are important math skills. This activity develops concepts such as size and comparison and encourages problem solving.)

2-5 Years—Dress Up

When a child becomes aware of clothing, he may want to take off his own clothes. It takes time before a child can put the clothes back on himself. The things a baby often learns to take off first are shoes, socks, and hats. Young children begin to take an interest in what other people wear and like to try on adult clothing or accessories. As the child gets older, they like to wear clothing related to their play—fire fighter hat, ballet slippers for dancing, an apron when cooking. They may also enjoy fantasy costumes

such as a princess, magician, or super hero. Children like to play with adult accessories that are no longer needed such as hats, jewelry, watches, purses, wallets, and key rings.

(Dressing and undressing promotes eye-hand coordination and helps the child develop a sense of mastery and self confidence. As the child begins to engage in fantasy play, clothing accessories often help stimulate the child's imagination and creativity.)

2-5 Years—Glasses and Goggles

Put out a selection of glasses and goggles and let the child try them on and look at themselves in a mirror. Include glasses frames without lenses, sunglasses, safety goggles, swim goggles or diving mask, and a pair of costume glasses with a fake nose and eyebrows. An eye patch is a good addition as well. Talk about the glasses and how they look on the child. This activity may lead into a discussion of why people wear glasses, or an eye patch or why they are blind.

(This fun activity promotes bonding between the child and parent. It helps young children make comparisons and stimulates vocabulary. If the discussion includes reasons people wear an eye patch or glasses it also helps a young child develop empathy for others.)

2-5 Years—Accessorizing

Put out a selection of old costume jewelry for the child. Mardi Gras type beads or those worn at sporting events might be a good selection. Children love to fit rings on their fingers, bracelets on their wrists and necklaces over their heads. They like to see how clip earrings look on their ears. Be sure to have a mirror available so the child can admire how he looks.

(Fitting jewelry over fingers, hands, and head helps develop eye-hand coordination. This activity offers many opportunities for vocabulary development and social interaction.)

MUSIC AND DANCE

Suggested Music and Dance Books

+indicates a CCBC Choices book

- Barrett, John. 2001. *Music!* Sesame Street Elmo's World. Random House. 0-3758-1337-3. Board Book.
- Cousins, Lucy. 2003. *Maisy Likes Music*. Candlewick. 0-7636-1915-9. Board Book.
- Ellwand, David. 2002. *Ten in the Bed*. Handprint. 1-9297-6649-1.
- +Greenfield, Eloise. 1991. *I Make Music*. Writers and Readers. 0-8631-6205-3. Board Book.
- Kelly, Martin. 2000. *The Ants Came Marching*. Handprint Books. 1-9297-6611-4. Board Book.
- Kubler, Annie. 2001. *The Wheels on the Bus*. Child's Play. 0-85953-895-8. Big Book.
- Manning, Jane K. 1998. *My First Songs*. HarperCollins. 0-694-00983-0.
- +Orozco, Jose-Luis. 1994. *De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs for Children*. Dutton. 0-525-45260-5.
- +Orozco, Jose-Luis. 1977. *Diez Deditos/Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America*. Dutton. 0-525-45736-4. Paperback.
- Raffi 1997. *Baby Beluga-Raffi Songs to Read*. Crown. 0-5177-0977-5. Board Book.
- Raffi. 1999. *Down By The Bay-Raffi Songs to Read*. Crown. 0-5178-0058-6. Board Book.
- Raffi. 1996. *Spider on the Floor-Raffi Songs to Read*. Crown, 1996. 0-5178-8553-0. Board Book.
- Raffi. 1998. *The Wheels on the Bus-Raffi Songs to Read*. Crown. 0-5177-0998-8.
- Trapani, Iza. 1999. *I'm a Little Teapot*. Charlesbridge. 1-5808-9055-5. Board Book.
- Whippo, Walt 2000. *Little White Duck*. Little Brown. 0-316-03227-1.

Suggested Recorded Music

- Beall, Pamela Conn and Susan Hagen Nipp. 2002, originally published 1996. *Wee Sing for Baby*. Price Stern Sloan. 0843177748. Cassette, CD with words. See "Dance To Your Daddy," "Hickory Dickory Dock," "Head and Shoulders," "Open Them Shut Them," "Pat-A-Cake," and "Pop Goes the Weasel."
- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDL. Cassette with words. See "Bingo," "Good-Bye Song," "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes," "Open, Shut Them," "Itsy Bitsy Spider," "I'm a Little Teapot," "Old MacDonald," "Wheels on the Bus," and "Pat-a-Cake."
- Palmer, Hap. 1997, originally published 1990. *Peek-A-Boo and Other Songs for Young Children*. Hap-Pal Music. B0000016YJ. CD with words. See "Baby Songs Theme Song," "Don't Wash My Blanket," "Just Fun," "My Mommy Comes Back," "Peek-A-Boo," "Teddy Bear," and "Walking."
- Raffi. 1989. *Raffi in Concert*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "All I Really Need," "Apples and Bananas," "Baby Beluga," "Knees Up Mother Brown," "The More We Get Together," "Shake My Sillies Out," and "Time to Sing."
- Raffi. 1982. *Raffi Rise and Shine*. Troubadour Records. B0000003HH. CD with words. See "I'm in the Mood," "Row, Row, Row," "Thumbelina," and "Wheels on the Bus."
- Raffi. 1976. *Singable Songs for the Very Young*. Troubadour Records. 1-886767-31-9. Cassette with words. See "Aikendrum," "Bumping Up and Down," "Down By the Bay," "Old MacDonald Had a Band," "The More We Get Together," and "Spider on the Floor."
- Sesame Street. 1997. *Hot, Hot, Hot Dance Songs*. Sony Wonder. B000002BR1. CD with words. See "Do the Benny Hop," "Do the Dog," "Macarena," "Mamba" "Me Lost Me Cookie at the Disco," and "New Way to Walk."
- Sesame Street. 1995. *Sesame Street Platinum All-Time Favorites*. Sony Wonder. 1-57330-513-8. Cassette with words. See "Doin' the Pigeon," "Elmo's Song," "Happy Tappin' with Elmo," "La Bamba," and "Sing."

Suggest Props for a Music Story Time

- Bring in musical instruments. If the librarian plays an instrument, certainly use it with the children but, if not, use cassettes or CDs and a player.
- Rattles can include pasta, beans, dried rice, or dry cereal in a baby bottle closed tightly with duct tape and wrist or leg strap on rattles for infants.
- Rhythm instruments, especially bells sewed to a circular strap, shakers, drums and xylophone.
- Musical baby books or toys, including squeak toys, Jack-in-the-Box or other musical pop-up toy.
- Musical floor pad for crawling babies or toddlers.
- Crepe paper streamers or colorful scarves for toddler dancing or to tie to a baby's foot.
- Parachute.

Extended Program Ideas for Music

Open and Close a Program with Music

Babies and young children learn to anticipate what comes next when they follow a recognized pattern that starts and ends an activity. Repetition helps “hard-wire” brain connections. Librarians may want to use a song, clapping rhythm, etc., to signal the start of the program each time and to end the same way, perhaps with the “Good-bye Song” by Hap Palmer. The rhyme “Oh My Goodness” that follows is also a good opening choice. It is always a good idea to repeat favorite songs and fingerplays even if they don't fit the theme for the day.

Bouncing

About three to six months, most babies will bounce the moment they hear music. Play Raffi's “Bumping Up and Down” and let the babies move to the music. Parents of young infants can gently bounce the children in their arms; toddlers will want to stand and bounce.

Hand Games

Clapping games and activities such as “Pat-A-Cake” help develop a sense of rhythm and timing. Toddlers may enjoy a version of “Open Them, Shut Them.”

Dancing

Play any song and encourage parents to dance with their children either in their arms or by holding a toddler's hands. Toddlers and parents might enjoy doing a silly dance like “The Chicken Dance” or “The Bunny Hop.” There may be traditional folk dances the group would be able to do such as “The Mexican Hat Dance.” The group may enjoy Sesame Street's version of “La Bamba” or any of the dances on *Hot, Hot Hot*.

Rubber Ducks and Other Squeak Toys

At registration time, inform parents that they should bring a rubber duck or other squeak toy to this program. Have a few extra on hand. Several of the books about baths in the bibliography feature a rubber duck. These stories can be combined with the rubber duck songs suggested in the bibliography or used with the fingerplays included below. Parents can squeak the rubber ducks in time to the music for their babies and help toddlers squeak the ducks themselves. This activity might be good to do toward the end of the program because the toddlers might not want to give up the ducks or stop squeaking them when the activity is over.

Rattles and Rhythm Shakers

Parents can keep time to music with rattles or shake their babies' legs if rattles are attached. Toddlers may like to shake their own instrument to music. Research indicates toys that make a sound or move when touched foster cognitive development, but be extremely careful about the volume of the toy. It is the child's interaction with the toy that is important. It is much better for a child to bang a wooden spoon on a metal pan, or hit two pan lids together to make a sound, than it is for them to push a button on an electric musical toy to get a response. Many musical toys for babies and toddlers are designed for interaction.

Musical Games

Encourage parents of toddlers to play musical circle games with their children. Any of the many games will work: “Farmer in the Dell,” “London Bridge,” “Ring Around the Rosy,” and “Mulberry Bush.”

Parachute Play

A small colorful parachute can add to the excitement of a musical program. Babies may like to watch while they sit in car seats under the parachute while the parents billow and shake it over their heads. Toddlers will like holding the parachute as they sing and walk in a circle with it.

Streamers

Crepe paper streamers or colorful scarves can be loosely tied to a baby’s feet so that when the baby is lying down and kicking, they may be able to see the colors fly. Toddlers enjoy holding streamers or scarves in their hands as they move and dance.

Take Home Project

Make a simple musical instrument for each child and parent to take home. Make a baby shaker by filling small plastic jars with rice, beans, dried cereal, etc.; use duct tape to seal it.

Oh, My Gosh! Look Who’s Here!

One way to begin a play session or story time for a group of toddlers is to say this rhyme and offer each child a chance to touch a new person if they want to do so. Be sure to say this with enthusiasm and have a big smile.

Oh, my gosh!

Oh, my goodness!

Look who’s here; look who’s here!

It’s my good friend, (insert child’s name).

Can you wave to me today, (insert child’s name)?

If the child says “yes” or waves, say “I’m so glad to see you.”

If the child doesn’t answer, says “no,” or seems afraid, say, “No wave today, but I’m so glad to see you.”

The children can greet each other and all wave as the rhyme is said for each child. As the child becomes more familiar with the new adult and other children, the greeting can be varied.

Do you want to shake my hand today?

Do you want to give me a high five?

Young children learn through repetition. Starting a story program the same way helps build connections in the brain. It also helps children feel familiar in the setting, know what is expected from them, and helps them anticipate the sequence of the program. This activity also helps children feel welcome in a group and part of a community of friends outside of the immediate family. An opening routine builds trust and encourages self confidence. An ending routine is also good because it, too, helps firm up brain connections and allows young children to recognize the ending as a signal of transition. The baby learns that something starts like this, and things happen, and then it ends like this.

Suggested Music and Dance Fingerplays, Songs, and Poems

“If You’re Happy And You Know It”

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.

(Infants—Parent claps baby’s hands)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child clap hands.)

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.

If you’re happy and you know it, your face will
always show it.

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands.

Additional actions can be added.

“Let Your Hands Go Clap, Clap, Clap”

Let your hands go clap, clap, clap.

(Infants—Parent claps baby’s hands together.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child clap hands.)

Let your feet go tap, tap, tap.

(Infants—Parent taps baby’s feet together.)

(Toddlers—Parent show child how to tap the floor with the toes of one foot.)

Let your head go no, no , no.

(Infants—Parent shakes head “no.”)

(Toddlers—Parent models shaking head “no.”)

Shake your hands and fold them so.

(Infants—Parent gently shakes baby’s hands, then fold together on the baby’s chest.)

(Toddlers—Parent models shaking hands, then folding them in lap.)

“Where Is Thumbkin?” “Pulgarcito”

(pull-gar’-see-toe)

Where is thumbkin?

Pulgarcito, ¿dónde estás?
*(pull-gar’-see-toe, ¿doe-n’-day
ay-stahs’)*

(Infants—Parent touches one of the baby’s thumbs)

Where is thumbkin?

Pulgarcito, ¿dónde estás?
*(Pull-gar’-see-toe, doe-n’-day
ay-stahs’)*

(Toddlers—Parent models holding up one thumb.)

Here I am.

¡Aquí estoy!
(a-key’ ay-stoy’)

(Infants—Parent touches the baby’s other thumb and then holds both.)

Here I am.

¡Aquí estoy!
(a-key’ ay-stoy’)

(Toddlers—Parent models holding both thumbs up, facing each other.)

How are you today, sir?

¿Cómo estás?
(coe’-moe ay-stahs’)

(Infants—Parent shakes one of the baby’s thumbs.)

(Toddlers— Parent shows child how to bend one thumb up and down, to make it “talk”.)

Very well, I thank you.

¡Muy bien, gracias!
(moy be’-in, gra-see’-ahs)

(Infants—Parent shakes the baby’s other thumb.)

(Toddlers—Parent models making the other thumb “talk.”)

Run away, run away.

Ya me voy OR Adiós
(Ya may voy) OR (ah dee’ ohz)

(Infants—Parent covers the thumb of one hand and then the other.)

(Toddlers—Hide first one thumb and then the other behind the back.)

Repeat verses for each finger, if children enjoy the activity.

Where is pointer?

Señor l’ndice ¿dónde estás?
*(seen’-your in-dee’-see
doe-n’-day ace-tas?)*

Where is tall man?

Señor Medio ¿dónde estás?
*(seen’-your may-dee’-oh
doe-n’-day ace-tas’?)*

Where is ring man? Señor Anular ¿dónde estás?
(seen'-your ahn-u'-lar
doe-n'-day ace-tas')

Where is pinkie? Señor Meñique ¿dónde estás?
(seen'-your men-ee'-kay
doe-n'-day ace-tas')

The music for this song can be found in Diez Deditos/Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

“Itsy Bitsy Spider”

The Itsy Bitsy Spider

(Infants—Parent crawls fingers up baby’s body.)

Climbed up the water spout.

(Toddlers—Parent crawls fingers up the child’s body.)

Down came the rain.

(Infants—Parent uses fingers to “rain” on the head and shoulders of the baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make rain with fingers.)

And washed the spider out.

(Infants—Parent whisks hands down the body of the child.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child move hands from side to side, one over the other in a “washed out” motion.)

Out came the sun

(Infants—Parent gently raises the baby’s arms overhead to make the sun.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make sun overhead with arms.)

And dried up all the rain.

(Infants—Parent whisks rain off baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child whisk away the rain.)

So the Itsy Bitsy Spider

(Infants—Parent crawls fingers up baby again.)

Went up the spout again.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make the spider walk up again.)

Spiders can be made from felt or plastic. Some toddlers may be very afraid of spiders in any form, so the parent can just use his fingers. Librarians can use a puppet if it doesn’t frighten the children.

“Two Little Feet Go Tap, Tap Tap”

Two little feet go tap, tap, tap.

(Infants—Parent taps baby’s feet together.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child tap feet on floor.)

Two little hands go clap, clap, clap.

(Infants—Parent taps baby’s hands together.)

(Toddlers—Parent models hand clapping.)

Two little fists go thump, thump, thump.

(Infants—Parent closes baby’s hands and moves them up and down.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to move fists in the air.)

Two little legs go jump, jump, jump.

(Infants—Parent bounces baby up and down.)

(Toddlers—Parent lifts child and helps her jump or bounce up and down.)

One little child turns slowly around.

(Infants—Parent turns slowly in a circle with the baby in his arms.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child turn in a circle.)

One little child sits quietly down.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sits down and places child on parent's lap.)

“Ring, Ring, Ring the Bells”

Ring, ring, ring the bells.

(Infants—Parent puts bells on baby's ankles or wrists and shakes the baby's hands or feet to ring the bells.)

Ring them loud and clear.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child ring a hand bell or shake a ring of bells.)

To tell the children everywhere

That music time is here.

“Dance To Your Daddy”

Dance to your Daddy, my little baby.

(Infants—Parent dances baby in the air.)

Dance to your Daddy, my little lamb.

(Toddlers—Parent dances backward and forward while holding child's hands.)

You shall have a fishy, in a little dishy.

(Toddlers—Parent helps make a fish with the child's hands by placing palms together, and then “swims” the fish.)

You shall have a fishy, when the boat comes in.

(Infants—Parent makes rowing motions with baby's arms.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make rowing motions.)

“The Wheels on the Bus”

The wheels on the bus

go round and round,

round and round.

round and round.

The wheels on the bus

go round and round,

all through the town.

Continue with other verses if the children enjoy the activity:

The driver on the bus

“Las Ruedas del Camión”

(las rue-ee'-das del ca-me'-ohn)

Las ruedas del camión
(las rue-ee'-das del
ca-me'-ohn)

van dando vueltas
(van dan-doe' vwell'-tas)

dando vueltas.
(don-doe vwel'-tas)

dando vueltas.
(don-doe' vwel'-tas)

Las ruedas del camión
(las rue-ee'-das del
ca-me'-ohn)

van dando vueltas
(van dan-doe' vwell'-tas)

por la ciudad.
(pour la see-oo'-dahd)

El chofer en el camión

(Infants—Parent rolls baby's hands in imitation of the wheels turning.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child roll hands over each other.)

(Infants—Parent moves baby's thumb

	dice (el choe'-fer en el ca-me'-ohn dee-say')	over baby's shoulder.)
says, "Move on back."	"Pasen para a atrás" (pa-sen' para ahl-traz')	(Toddlers—Parent helps child stick out thumb and point with it over their shoulder.)
"Move on back. Move on back."	"Pasen para a atrás" (pa-sen' para ahl-traz')	
The people on the bus	La gente en el camión (la hen'-tay en el ca-me'-ohn)	(Infants—Parent bounces baby on parent's lap.)
o bump, bump, bump.	salta y salta (salt'-ah ee salt'-ah)	(Toddlers—Parent helps child bounce in place.)

The music for this song can be found in Diez Deditos/Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

"My Aunt Monica"	"Mi Tía Mónica" (me tea'-ah Moh'-nee-ca)	
I have an aunt who dances.	Yo tengo una tía (yo tayn'-go oo-nah tea'- ah)	(Infants—Parent holds baby and dances.)
Her name is Monica.	Llamada Mónica. (ya-ma'-da moh'-nee-ca)	(Toddlers—Parent hold's child's hands and dances, swaying to the music and making silly faces for "ooh, la, la.")
And when she starts to dance.	Que cuando va a bailar (kay quan-do' va a bay'-lar)	
Everyone goes ooh, la, la.	Le dicen u, la, la. (lay dee'-cen ooh, la, la)	
Ooh, la, la, ooh, la, la.	U, la, la, u, la, la (ooh, la, la, ooh, la, la)	
Everyone goes ooh, la, la.	Le dicen u, la, la (lay dee'-cen ooh, la, la)	

The music for this song can be found in Diez Deditos Ten Little Fingers and Other Play Rhymes and Action Songs from Latin America by José-Luis Orozco. Dutton, 1997.

Circle Games For Toddlers

"Baby London Bridge"

London Bridge is all broke down. *(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks between
bridge ends with child.)*

All broke down, all broke down.
London Bridge is all broke down.
My fair lady. (gentleman)

London Bridge is all built up. *(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks between
raised arms of the bridge with child.)*

All built up, all built up.
London Bridge is all built up.

My fair lady (gentleman).
London Bridge is falling down.
Falling down, falling down.
London Bridge is falling down.
My fair lady (gentleman).

(Infants and Toddlers—Bridge ends drop arms and capture one parent and child, hold them briefly, then release them.)

It might work best to have two adults stand as the bridge with their child in their arms. Then the other parents and children walk between the bridge ends. The bridge ends form an arch by joining hands. The other parents and children continue to walk under the arch.

For Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Bedtime—"Rock-A-Bye-Baby," "Tommy Thumbs"

Counting—"Five Little Chickies/Cinco Pollitos"

Family, Friends and Community—"Good Morning/Buenos Dias," "The More We Get Together," "Round and Round the Village"

Farm Animals—"Baby Farmer in the Dell"

Food—"Hey Diddle Diddle," "Ring-Around-the-Potato/Al Corro de la Pafafa"

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Music

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0 Months-Forever—Sing Lullabies and Songs Together

At bedtime or anytime the infant or child is tired or restless, sing favorite lullabies to her as you rock her. Two popular songs are "Rock-A-Bye Baby" and "Hush Little Baby" but any gentle song will work.

(Singing and rocking helps develop a bond between the parent and infant. It soothes both the parent and child. The repetition of a familiar song helps a baby or child anticipate bedtime. The familiarity helps the baby make connections in her brain. The song and rocking helps a baby or child calm down and relax in preparation for bedtime or whenever the child is upset. It's good to tell other people who care for the baby or child the song you sing so they can sing it too. That helps reassure the child that, even if the parent is not there, everything is fine and the bedtime routine will go as usual.)

0-6 Months—Crib Mobiles and Other Musical Toys

Research shows that babies are very aware of music at even three months of age. If a baby associates music with touching a mobile, they will remember the song when they hear it even seven days later and reach out to touch whatever toy or mobile made the song when they first heard it. At first, babies prefer to look at black and white images; but after that, as their eyes begin to focus better, they prefer bright colors.

(Music helps develop listening skills and a sense of rhythm. Language depends not only on learning words, but the rhythm of how they are pronounced as well.)

0-3 Months—Listen, Where Is It?

Put the baby in an infant seat in the middle of the room. Walk around the room and say her name or sing or shake a rattle. Move from one spot to another sometimes near the baby and sometimes farther away. Move close so the baby can both see and hear the parent, then gradually move away, so he can only hear the parent. The baby may not yet turn toward the sound but will be able to hear the voice or sound.

(This helps develop the baby's listening skills and helps him practice locating the source of a sound.)

0-6 Months—Ma, Ma, Mama

To the tune of Old MacDonald, sing the same syllable instead of words and let the baby watch the shape of the mouth.

Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Mama!
Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Mommy.
Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Mama!

(Very young babies are interested in the human face, especially a parent's face. When they watch an adult speak to them, they may try to open their own mouth in imitation of the parent. By watching the parent's face and listening to a repeated sound, babies begin to understand how to make vocal sounds themselves. This practice is part of the process of learning to speak.)

3- Months—Grab It!

At about three or four months, a baby starts to reach out for things she sees. Before that, a baby may kick and wave her hands with excitement when she sees or hears a toy that interests her. To encourage her to reach and take things, shake a rattle or squeak another toy in front of the baby so she both sees it and hears the noise it makes. Praise and encourage her if she reaches for it.

(This develops eye-hand coordination, gives practice in listening to sounds, and develops a beginning sense of accomplishment.)

3-6 Months—Homemade Sound Shakers

Cut the top off two small milk cartons. Put bells, dry beans, pieces of dry cereal, uncooked rice, dry pasta, or poker chips into one carton and add some cotton batting filler. Insert the second milk carton into the first one to form a small box. Cover the box with contact paper, or put these same objects into a plastic egg. Poke a hole in the top of the egg with a hot needle or other tool and thread a ribbon through the hole. Make a knot big enough to prevent the ribbon from pulling out of the hole in the egg. Put any of the objects mentioned above in a baby bottle or a clean, empty spice bottle and seal it with duct tape. Shake these instruments and talk about the sounds. Smile and praise the baby if he tries to shake them.

(Helps with sound discrimination, cause and effect, eye-hand coordination, and helps develop a sense of rhythm.)

3-6 Months—Rolling Rattles

Put bells, dry beans, pieces of dry cereal, or uncooked rice into a toilet paper tube and cut out cardboard circles to cover the ends of the tube. Cover the ends with contact paper or duct tape. Or, put these things in an extra baby bottle. Make sure the lid is on tight and tape it shut to make sure it will not come off. Shake the container to get the baby's attention. Put the baby on her stomach and encourage her to reach for or crawl after the container as it rolls on the floor. Don't leave the baby alone with these toys because if the tops come off the baby could choke on the little pieces.

(This activity teaches sound discrimination and listening skills. The sound may encourage babies who are not yet crawling to inch forward, roll over, or reach for the toy.)

3-6 Months—Home Made Drums

Put out an empty coffee can or oatmeal container and tap on the top of it. Encourage the baby to try making a sound on it by tapping. Give him a wooden spoon to pound with on the containers. Turn a cooking pot upside down and let the baby use the spoon to hit the pot.

(Drum play teaches cause and effect, promotes listening skills and sound discrimination, helps develop a sense of rhythm and pattern, and helps develop eye-hand coordination.)

6-9 Months—Bang the Drum

Pots and pans also make good drums. Give the baby a wooden spoon and show her how to hit a pot that is turned over to make a sound. Praise the baby's efforts. Turn the pot right side up and show the baby how to use the wooden spoon to stir inside the pan or hit the sides of the pan.

(This develops small muscles in the hand and helps the baby practice eye-hand coordination. It also fosters listening skills and a sense of rhythm.)

6-18 Months—Clapping and Pat-a-Cake

As a baby's hand coordination improves, the baby has a great deal of interest in what his hands can do. He likes to reach and grab things. He enjoys a game of clapping. He learns that people like to say good-bye to him by waving and that they respond with a smile when he waves at them.

He likes to have an adult help move his hands as the parent or care giver says the pat-a-cake rhyme until he masters the clapping part for himself. The "roll them and roll them" part take longer for the baby to learn, but he likes to have someone help him roll his hands.

(Clapping helps develop eye-hand coordination. The pat-a-cake song helps build vocabulary. Since pat-a-cake is so popular with adults, the baby learns that he knows a game he can use to interact with most adults. He just has to get them started and most adults will start singing the song for him. This helps develop the child's sense of control because he learns he can make adults react to him. He also learns how to initiate a social contact.)

6-18 Months—Musical Pop Up Toys

Toys that pop up suddenly in response to something the child has manipulated keep babies interested for quite a long time. At first, the baby just likes watching as the parent manipulates the toy. Then, the baby may help push the toy back down after it pops up. Later, the baby will enjoy controlling the toy himself. Some toys that pop up very suddenly may frighten babies at certain ages, but they gradually begin to enjoy the surprise. A musical pop up toy, like a jack-in-the-box, gives the baby an auditory clue of when to anticipate the popping action. This helps develop the baby's listening skills.

(Pop up toys teach cause and effect, prediction, reward anticipation, and promote eye-hand coordination. It helps the baby develop a sense of *object permanence* (that the object still exists even if the baby can't see it) which, in turn, helps overcome separation anxiety when a parent leaves. This type of toy helps develop self-esteem and a sense of mastery and power.)

9 Months-5 Years—Xylophone

By nine months a baby usually has enough hand control to hit a xylophone with a wooden spoon or mallet. The child can explore the idea of musical scales. As the child matures, his exploration may become more planned and less random.

(Xylophones offer practice with eye-hand coordination, small muscle control, and help a child develop musical listening skills.)

9-18 Months—Stop and Go Dancing

Babies love to have a parent hold them and dance with them. The type of music doesn't really matter. However, both the baby's and parent's ear drums can be damaged by loud music, so play the music at a normal volume. To add a little surprise to the dance, the parent can stop suddenly especially as a song ends. When the parent stops, the baby has to catch her balance. Most babies enjoy these sudden starts and stops.

(Dancing promotes musical listening skills and a sense of body rhythm. It helps develop a sense of balance and promotes social skill development.)

12 Months-3 Years—Musical Parachute Play

Parachutes are generally more fun to use with several babies and parents at a time for a group play session. Once a child is walking with a fairly good sense of balance, he may enjoy having the parachute held over his head and those of his friends, slowly lowered and raised rhythmically. Adults can sweep the parachute into the air and let go so it floats down over the children. Children and parents can hold onto the edge of the parachute and walk in a circle singing "Ring-Around-the-Rosy." They fall to the floor at the end and let the parachute float down on them. Music that starts and stops suddenly can be used with toddlers walking in a circle holding the parachute.

Older toddlers, who can retain their balance while shaking the edges of the parachute, can include bounce beach balls or soft smaller balls on the surface of the parachute or crawl under it while it is shaken over their heads. Music adds to the fun.

(Parachute play challenges a child's sense of balance, strengthens large muscles, promotes coordination, develops a sense of cause and effect, and fosters the beginnings of group play when several children are involved.)

18 Months-5 Years—Tambourine

By about eighteen months, a toddler can usually hold, shake, and tap a tambourine. A tambourine makes sounds when the baby shakes the jingles or when she taps it. As the child matures, she may be able to echo a rhythm the parent makes with a tambourine. Marching while playing a tambourine is a fun activity for children about the age of three and up.

(Playing with a tambourine helps develop a child's musical listening and music making skills. It is useful in teaching a sense of rhythm and promotes eye-hand coordination. When combined with an activity such as marching, it helps the child explore body rhythm, timing, and helps exercise both large and small muscles.)

2-5 Years—Circle Songs and Games

At about age two, children begin to understand that some games have rules. They enjoy playing with other children, but often do not know how to interact. A parent can teach a child the words and motions to familiar circle songs and games such as "Ring-Around-The-Rosy," "The Farmer in the Dell," "London Bridge," "Mulberry Bush," and "Pop Goes the Weasel." The young child then understands what she should do when she joins other children playing a game she recognizes.

(Circle games and songs give children a range of songs to sing to themselves. They enjoy the social companionship of holding hands with other children or adults and begin to develop an understanding of and appreciation for cooperative play.)

2 1/2-5 Years—Ribbon Dancing

Tie lengths of about 12 to 25 inches of brightly colored ribbons to embroidery hoops, or canning jar lids, or make hoops from the lids of plastic containers. Give these ribbon hoops to the child when you turn on music. The colors and movement of the ribbons will float and twirl around the child as he dances adding to the excitement of dancing.

(Ribbon dancing adds to the child's sense of movement and rhythm, it promotes coordination and large muscle development, and fosters creativity.)

NATURE

Suggested Nature Books

+ indicates a CCBC Choices book

Suggested Bug Books

- +Brown, Ruth. 2000. *Snail Trail*. Crown. 0-375-80696-2.
- Carle, Eric. 1995. *The Very Busy Spider*. Philomel. 0-399-22919-1. Board Book.
- Carle, Eric. 1994. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Philomel. 0-399-22690-7. Board Book.
- +Flemming, Denise. 1995. *In the Tall Tall Grass*. Holt. 0-805-03941-4. Paperback. Also available Big Book. 0-805-02950-8.
- Gerth, Melanie. 2001. *Ten Little Ladybugs*. Piggy Toes Press. 1-581-170912-4.
- Greenway, Shirley. 1992. *Legs and All*. Whispering Coyote. 1-879-08552-6. Board Book.
- +Keller, Holly. 2002. *Farfallina and Marcel*. HarperCollins. 0-06-623932-X.
- +Swope, Sam. 2000. *Gotta Go! Gotta Go!* Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 0-374-32757-2.
- Wells, Rosemary. 1998. *Itsy Bitsy Spider*. Scholastic. 0-590-02911-8. Board Book.

Suggested Plant Books

- Ehlert, Lois. 1990. *Growing Vegetable Soup*. Voyager Books. 0-152-32580-8. Paperback.
- Ehlert, Lois. 1992. *Planting a Rainbow*. Voyager Books. 0-152-62610-7. Paperback.
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- Palmer, Hap. 2000. *Early Childhood Classics*. Hap-Pal Music. B000004RDL. Cassette includes words. See "Itsy Bitsy Spider" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star."
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- Raffi. *Raffi in Concert*. 1989. Troubadour Records. Rounder. B0000003HS. Cassette with words. See "Baby Beluga," "One Light, One Sun" and "Everything Grows."
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Suggested Props for Nature Story Time

- Bug stickers
- Ladybug or butterfly finger puppet
- Soft Flower Sculptures
- Flower stickers
- Watering can
- Rabbit finger puppet

Extended Program Ideas for Nature

***Buzz, Buzz, Buzz Went the Bumblebee* by Colin West**

This story may get parents and care givers in the mood to use their finger to make a buzzing bumblebee and gently tickle and buzz the children.

***Gotta Go! Gotta Go!* by Sam Swope**

The urgency in the story will be familiar to parents or care givers of toddlers who always seem to be in a hurry to go everywhere. The refrain of "Gotta go, gotta go. Gotta go to Mexico" can help parents explain the concept and excitement of "hurry" to toddlers.

***In The Tall Tall Grass?* by Denise Fleming**

Use this book to introduce the insects that live in tall grass. This is a basic overview for an ecological system.

***Itsy Bitsy Spider* by Rosemary Wells**

The illustrations in this book will be the natural start for the familiar song. Suggested hand movements are included in the following section.

***Snail Trail* by Ruth Brown**

Like a baby, this snail has a unique perspective on the world as he crawls along. Use it to initiate a crawling activity with toddlers and their parents or care givers. Everyone can crawl on hands and knees and take a new look at the room from that perspective.

***Growing Vegetable Soup* and *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert**

Both of these books could be used to lead into a simple seed planting activity. One simple way to show young children how a seed develops is to put a pea or bean inside a folded, damp paper towel and open it each day to see if it has sprouted. It can later be planted in earth or potting soil so the child can watch it grow.

***Scratch and Sniff Garden* Dorling Kindersley.**

Young children enjoy sniffing the smells in a scratch and sniff book. The concept of how flowers or plants smell can be extended if some cut or potted flowers are brought in, and the children are allowed to sniff the real thing. Maybe they can each take a real flower home with them.

***Moon Glowing* by Elizabeth Partridge**

The simple text and illustrations help even young children gain an understanding of how four animals prepare for winter. The book offers many opportunities for the parents or care givers to elaborate on the text and "talk" the pages instead of reading them.

“A Bee Sat on My Nose”

What do you suppose?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent raises both hands near face and looks surprised.)

A bee sat on my nose!

(Infants—Parent gently taps baby’s nose.)

(Toddlers—Parent and child rub noses.)

Then what do you think?

He gave me a great big wink,

(Infants—Parents do an exaggerated wink.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to wink.)

And said, “I beg your pardon,

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent puts hand over mouth and pretends to have made a mistake.)

I thought you were a garden.”

“Bug in the Rug”

Bug in the rug. Bug in the rug.

(Infants—Parent wraps baby lightly and covers the baby’s head with a blanket.)

(Toddlers—Parent rolls child lightly inside a blanket or sheet.)

Who is that bug in the rug?

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent uncovers child’s head and acts surprised to find him.)

“Fuzzy Caterpillar”

The fuzzy little caterpillar

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent inches index finger up the child’s arm or leg, like a caterpillar.)

Curled up on a leaf.

(Infants—Parent closes baby’s fingers around parent’s index finger.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make himself small.)

Spun her little chrysalis

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent runs hand around the child as if wrapping him.)

And then fell fast asleep.

(Infants—Parent kisses baby’s eyes.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child rest his cheeks on folded hands and pretend to sleep.)

While she was sleeping

She dreamed that she could fly.

(Infants—Parent flutters child’s arms.)

(Toddlers—Parent models flapping arms like wings.)

And when she woke up,

(Infants—Parent puts hands together and locks thumbs then flutters fingers like a butterfly.)

She was a butterfly.

(Toddlers—Parent and child pretend to fly by fluttering arms and moving around the room.)

Librarian demonstrates the actions on a doll and joins toddlers in pretending to fly around the room.

“Arabella Miller”

Use melody from “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”

Little Arabella Miller

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent inches finger up child’s arm as if it is a caterpillar crawling.)

Found a wooly caterpillar.	<i>(Infants—Parent inches caterpillar up the parent's arm.)</i>
First it crawled upon her mother,	<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child form a caterpillar with index finger and makes it crawl up the parent's arm.)</i>
Then upon her baby brother.	<i>(Infants and Toddlers —Parent inches the caterpillar up the child's arm.)</i>
They all said, "Arabella Miller	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends brush away the caterpillar, but then smiles and hugs child.)</i>
Take away that caterpillar!"	

Alternate ending—Let me see that caterpillar!

The music for this song can be found in numerous children's song books, including Eye Winker, Tom Tinker, Chin Copper: Fifty Musical: Fingerplays by Tom Glazer, Doubleday, 1980.

"The Butterfly"

"La Mariposa"

	(la mar-ee-poe'-sah)	
One, two, three, four, five.	Uno, dos, tres, (oo'-no, doe-z, trace.) cuatro, cinco. (qwa tro,' sin-ko')	<i>(Infants—Parent counts the fingers or toes on one of the baby's hands or feet.)</i>
		<i>(Toddlers—Parent helps child put up five fingers, one at a time.)</i>
Once I caught a butterfly alive.	Cogi' una (coe-gee' oo'-na) mariposa de un brinco. (mar-ee-poe'-sah day oon brin'-coe.)	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to catch child.)</i>
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten.	seis, siete, ocho, (say-z, see-ay'-tay, oh choh') nueve, diez. (new-ay'-vay, dee-ay'-z)	<i>(Infants—Parent counts the toes or fingers on the baby's other hand or foot.)</i>
		<i>(Toddler—Parent helps child hold up all the fingers on one hand and then as the numbers are counted holds up each finger on the second hand.)</i>
Then I let him go again.	La solte' brincando (la soul-tay' brin-caun'-doe otra vez. (oh'-tra vase.)	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent catches child again and then releases her.)</i>

Plants

"Mary Mary"

Mary, Mary, quite contrary	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent frowns and looks contrary.)</i>
How does your garden grow?	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent walks fingers up a line on the child's back.)</i>
With silver bells and cockle shells	<i>(Infants and Toddlers—Parent touches each of the</i>

All in a pretty, pretty row.

buttons or snaps on the front of the child's clothes or just touches child's chest in a row.)

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pats and kisses child.)

“The Flower”

Here's a green leaf.

(Infants—Parent holds up one of baby's hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up one hand.)

And here's a green leaf.

(Infants—Parent holds up the baby's other hand.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up other hand.)

That, you see, makes two.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent shakes one of child's hands and then the other, and claps them together.)

Here is a bud.

(Infants—Parent makes a fist with one of baby's hands.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make a fist.)

That makes a flower.

(Infants—Parent slowly opens baby's fingers and sniffs the finger “petals.”)

Watch it bloom for you.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child open fingers as if a flower is unfolding and sniffs the petals.)

“Dig a Hole”

Dig a little hole.

(Infants—Parent gently scratches baby's tummy as if digging.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to dig a hole.)

Plant a little seed.

(Infants—Parent pretends to drop a seed on baby's tummy.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to drop in a seed.)

Pour a little water.

(Infants—Parent taps fingers on baby's tummy as if water is falling.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to water the seed or to make rain fall.)

Pull a little weed.

(Infants—Parent gently tugs at baby's shirt.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to pull a weed.)

Chase a little bug.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent pretends to try to catch a bug crawling on the child.)

Heigh-ho, there he goes.

Give a little sunshine.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent raises child's arms overhead to form the sun.)

Grow a little rose.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent sniffs and hugs child.)

“I Dig, Dig, Dig”

I dig, dig, dig

Infants—Parent makes a soft digging or pawing motion on the baby’s tummy or back.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to dig and throw dirt with a shovel.)

And I plant some seeds.

(Infants—Parent taps baby with fingers to sprinkle seeds.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to plant and cover seeds.)

I rake, rake, rake.

(Infants—Parent spreads fingers and gently makes a raking motion on the baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to rake dirt.)

And pull some weeds.

(Infants—Parent gently pulls one of the child’s legs and then the other, then each arm.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to pull weeds.)

I’ll wait and watch and soon I know

(Infants—Parent cocks head from side to side and smiles.)

(Toddlers—Parent imitates walking back and forth and looking at the floor.)

My garden sprouts and starts to grow.

(Infants—Parent raises baby’s arms overhead, or slowly lifts baby overhead.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to crouch on floor and slowly rise to imitate a plant growing.)

“Little Seed”

Little seed in the ground

(Infants—Parent puts a light blanket over the baby’s face.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child crouch down and be still.)

Sitting so still.

Little seed will you sprout?

(Infants—Parent whisks blanket off baby and smiles.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to jump up and stretch out his arms for the leaves.)

Yes I will!

“It’s Time to Plant the Seeds”

Sing to tune of the Farmer in the Dell

It’s time to plant the seeds.

(Infants—Parent sprinkles seeds on the child’s tummy, back, arms or legs, then pats them down.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to be a small seed or to plant seeds and pat them into the ground.)

It’s time to plant the seeds.

Heigh-ho, the derry-o.

It’s time to plant the seeds.

Continue with these verses:

The sun shines in the sky.

(Infants—Parent raises baby’s arms overhead to make a sun.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child make circle with arms above head for the sun.)

The rain begins to fall,

(Infants—Parent taps baby with fingers to imitate rain.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps imitate with their fingers to represent the rain.)

The seeds begin to grow.

(Infants—Parent slowly raises the hands of the baby or lifts the baby slowly upward.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child start to stand in imitation of a seed growing.)

And now the plants are tall

(Infants—Parent raises the baby's hands above head.)

And now the plants are tall.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to raise hands overhead and stand on tip toe.)

Heigh-ho, the derry-o

There's plenty here for all.

With toddlers, the librarian can walk around with a watering can and pretend to water each child.

“This Is the Way We Water the Plants”

Use melody from “Mulberry Bush.”

This the way we water the plants.

(Infants—Parent sits with the baby on the parent's lap and raises the baby's arms to form a spout and tips the baby to one side.)

Water the plants.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to be a watering can, forming a handle and spout, and tip from the waist to water the flowers.)

Water the plants.

This is the way we water the plants

Whenever they get dry.

We water the plants so they can grow,

(Infants—Parent slowly lifts baby overhead.)

So they can grow.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to imitate a seed growing by first crouching on the ground and then slowly standing.)

So they can grow.

We water the plants so they can grow,

Right up to the sky.

This contributes to balance and coordination as well as helping the child use both sides of his body.

“Autumn Leaves Are Falling Down”

Use the melody from “London Bridge.”

Autumn leaves are falling down,

(Infants—Parent slowly lower baby to the floor or gently taps the baby's tummy with fingers to pretend the leaves are landing on the baby.)

Falling down, falling down.

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to slowly fall to the floor or flutter fingers to the floor.)

Autumn leaves are falling down,

Covering the ground.

The fall wind blows them all around,

(Infants—Parent gently blows on baby's skin.)

All around, all around.

(Toddlers--Parent blows on child or they can blow

together making a wind sound as they dance around like leaves.)

The fall wind blows them all around,
All around the ground.

RAIN AND SEASONS

“Rain on the Green Grass”

Rain on the green grass;

(Infants—Parent gently taps fingers first on baby’s feet, then the shoulders, and finally on the baby’s head.)

Rain on the tree;

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to pretend it is raining by wiggling fingers, first on the child’s head, then shoulders, and finally on the child’s feet.)

Rain on the housetop,
But not on me!

(Infants—Parent shakes head “no,” smiles, and kisses baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent demonstrates how to shake head “no” and points to self with thumb.)

“It’s Raining, It’s Pouring”

It’s raining, it’s pouring.

(Infants—Parent imitates raindrops falling on the baby’s tummy by lightly tapping with fingertips.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to imitate raindrops with fingers.)

The old man is snoring.
He went to bed and

(Infants—Parent snores loudly for child to imitate.)

(Infants—Parent pulls blanket up over baby’s face.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to sleep and snore.)

He bumped his head.

(Infants—Parent uncovers baby’s face and kisses his head.)

(Toddlers—Parent shows child how to rub his head.)

And he won’t wake up

(Infants—Parent quickly covers and uncovers baby’s face with blanket.)

‘Til morning, ‘til morning.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to wake up, rub eyes, yawn, and stretch arms.)

“I Hear Thunder”

Use melody from “Are You Sleeping?”

I hear thunder, I hear thunder.

(Infants—Parent looks surprised and cocks hand behind ear.)

Listen, don’t you? Listen, don’t you?

(Toddlers—Parent turns head as if listening then shows child how to put hand behind ear as if to hear better.)

Pitter, patter raindrops.

(Infants—Parent taps gently with fingertips on baby’s tummy to imitate rain falling, then points first to self and then to baby.)

Pitter, patter raindrops.
I'm wet through.

*(Toddlers—Parent demonstrates raindrops falling.)
(Infants—Parent points finger first at the baby and then at herself.)*

(Toddlers—Parent helps point child's finger first at the child and then at the parent.)

So are you!

“Rain, Rain Go Away”

Rain, rain go away.
Come again some other day.

(Infants—Parent waves bye-bye to baby.)

(Toddlers—Parent imitates rain and shows child how to brush it away.)

Rain, rain go away.
Little _____ wants to play.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent smiles at child and inserts name.)

Animals

“Three Green Speckled Frogs”

Three green and speckled frogs,
Sitting on a speckled log.
Eating some delicious bugs.

*(Infants—Parent hops fingers three times on baby.)
(Toddlers—Parent helps child hold up three fingers.)
Infants—Parent smacks lips, chews and swallows loudly and then rubs baby's tummy.)*

Yum, yum, yum!

(Toddlers—Parent helps child imitate smacking lips, chewing, swallowing and patting tummy.)

One jumped into the pool,

(Infants—Parent jumps hand off baby's tummy and into the “water” to the side.)

Where it was nice and cool.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child pretend to jump, hold nose in a dive and gulp water.)

Gulp, gulp, glup.
Repeat substituting two and then one frog.

“Here's a Bunny”

Here's a bunny with ears so funny.

(Infants and Toddlers—Parent gently wiggles child's ears.)

And here is the hole in the ground.

(Infants—Parent makes circle by touching thumbs and pointer fingers together.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child place one hand on hip to form an opening with the arm and elbow.)

At the slightest noise he pricks up his ears,

(Infants—Parent wiggles baby's ears, then forms the circle again and peers through it at the baby as if he is the rabbit in the hole.)

(Toddlers—Parent helps child touch ring and little finger to thumb to form bunny's head and hold up the index and middle fingers for his ears.)

And he jumps in the hole in the ground.

(Toddlers—Parent helps child hop the bunny through the hole.)

For Additional Related Songs and Fingerplays See

Colors and Counting—“Count the Spots,” “Here Is the Beehive,” “1,2,3 There's a Bug on Me”

Food—“Little Miss Muffet”

Music—“Itsy Bitsy Spider”

Age Appropriate Learning Activities for Nature

Note: All ages for beginning activities are approximate; it is normal for babies to do things at different times. The ending times for activities are also approximate because children may enjoy the same activities long after they start school.

0-3 Months—Baby Names and Cuddles

Parent smiles at baby and says “I love you here; I love you here and here.” The parent kisses the baby’s nose, eyes, cheeks, and other body parts each time he says “I love you here.”

(The more a baby is held and cuddled as an infant, the more security and trust they feel. Cuddling infants helps them mature as confident and independent individuals.)

0-6 Months—Wind Sock

Place a wind sock where a baby can see it blowing and twisting in a breeze. The baby may want to try to reach out and touch it.

(The movement of a wind sock attracts and keeps attention and interest and offers a chance to observe a force of nature.)

0 Months-5 Years—Make Time for Nature

Make time for outdoor play and observation. Babies need to experience the natural world. Even urban areas offer plenty of ways to enjoy nature. Encourage children’s natural curiosity about the outdoor world but, make sure they are safe. Check the ground for sharp or harmful objects before letting the child sit or walk. Don’t let the child touch plants that are unfamiliar; they might be poisonous. Objects smaller than the size of the child’s fist are a choking hazard. Babies learn respect for nature from watching adults. Set a good example. Show appreciation for the beauty in nature. Pick up litter. Be kind to animals. Care for plants.

(Children learn to value what their parents value. When parents frequently expose their babies and young children to nature and the natural environment around them, children take an interest and learn to respect the things their parents value.)

0 Months-5 Years—For the Birds

Babies enjoy being held at a window to watch birds at a feeder. Young babies like the movement. Parents can talk about what the birds are doing and describe them as the birds eat. As a child gets older, he may enjoy helping to put food out for the birds.

(Watching animals in nature helps children develop good observation skills. Helping care for animals develops a sense of empathy and responsibility.)

3-15 Months—Animal or Nature Book

Put photographs of animals into zipper-style baggies and tape the baggies together to form a book. Or, put pictures between plastic sheets in a small photo album. Let him page through the book. Name and describe the animals he sees. Encourage him to say the name of the animal or make a baby hand sign for it. A variation on this concept is to take real things from nature such as ferns, leaves, twigs, and feathers and put them inside the baggies so the baby can examine them closely.

(These home-made books encourage babies to name things in nature, learn to turn pages, and give them practice with eye-hand coordination.)

9-12 Months—Nature Explorer

Let a baby crawl on grass and touch the earth. Pat a tree and talk about the texture of the bark. Blow the fluff off a dandelion. Sniff flowers. Playing outside helps a baby become aware of the world around her.

(Taking time to show a baby things outside and talking about them helps the baby focus and teaches vocabulary. Early exposure to outdoor activities can lay the foundation for a life-long love of the outdoors.)

9-12 Months—Nature Appreciation from a Stroller

A ride in a stroller can also be a great time to help a baby learn to appreciate nature. A baby might enjoy sitting under a tree as the leaves are falling, watching snowflakes fall, and even rain drops if the baby's stroller is well protected from the wet and cold. Stop along the way and talk about plants or animals the baby sees.

(Stroller-time talk helps build a vocabulary of nature words and helps introduce the baby to the world around her.)

9 Months-2 Years—Bare Foot Baby

Take the baby's shoes off and, holding the baby's hand, help him walk on new textures—grass, cement, smooth rocks, and in puddles.

(Walking barefoot heightens the sensory experience of these new textures. Touch surfaces before standing a baby on them to make sure they are not too hot and that there is nothing that will hurt the baby's feet.)

9 Months-5 Years—At the Zoo or County Fair

A baby enjoys looking at the animals in a zoo or at a county fair. Talk about the animals and get as close as possible. If there is an opportunity for the child to touch or hold an animal, provide close supervision but let the child touch the animal. Show a baby how to touch an animal with just one finger to overcome the natural desire to grab or squeeze an animal. Mimic the sounds of the animal or motions the animal is making. Talk about the colors of the animal, the fur or feathers, the teeth, nose, and mouth. Talk about what the animal eats and how it moves.

(Watching animals helps heighten a baby's observation skills and fosters an interest in the animals of the world.)

12 Months-5 Years—Listen to That!

Let the baby walk outside in a natural area. Put her in a backpack or stroller and, while walking along, encourage the child to listen to the sounds of nature—wind, leaves rustling, rain, birds chirping, crickets. Tell the child what made the noise and point out the source if it is visible.

(Listening to nature sounds helps develop auditory discrimination skills.)

15-18 Months—Going to the Park

If it is a nice day, the child can help get a doll or stuffed animal ready to go to the park. The parent and child can play a game of pretend even if they can't really go to the park. The parent can ask the child what the toy should wear for the day. The discussion can include shoes or boots and a jacket or hat. Then the discussion could turn to what to take for a snack or lunch. And, finally, the child can be asked what the toy would like to do at the park and what they might see.

(This activity stimulates vocabulary development and imagination and also helps the child with decision making.)

18 Months-5 Years—I Spy

Take the baby for a walk outside and talk about things in nature. Play the "I Spy" game starting at about two years. To help a child spot something, give clues about color, shape, and size. Indicate if the child should look up high or down low.

(Nature walks help develop a love of nature and appreciation for the environment. They help observation skills.)

18 Months-5 Years—Water the Flowers

When a child is walking well and can carry a small amount of water in a sprinkling can, she can help water outdoor plants and flowers. She will enjoy holding a hose as water is sprayed from it.

(Children learn that all living things need to be cared for and the basic needs for them are the same as for people. Animals and plants need food, water, light, and air. By helping care for plants and watching them grow, young children learn important science lessons.)

18 Months-5 Years—Sniff that Nice Fresh Smell

Nature offers many smells, some pleasant, some not. When traveling, comment on smells such as manure, pigs or skunks and encourage the child to sniff when the air is fresh or fragrant. Bring nature indoors and let the child sniff things like pine needles, fresh earth, herbs, or flowers. Teach a child how to sniff flowers without picking them or hurting them. Explain why it is important to leave some flowers outside to grow just because they smell good and look so pretty.

(Sniffing develops the sense of smell and fosters sensory discrimination. It also promotes language and vocabulary development.)

2-5 Years—Mud Pies

Water enhances play in the sandbox or on the beach. A child can explore the outcome of mixing water with sand and exploring the texture. It is an acceptable time to get messy and dirty. It helps lead a child to an appreciation for the earth under his feet.

(Combining water and sand allows a child to explore the effect different amounts of liquid have on sand. Wet sand and mud offer delightful tactile experiences and stimulate creativity as the child molds the sand and mud and engages in imaginary play.)

2-5 Years—Leaf and Nut Sorting

Bring in several leaves or nuts from different types of harmless plants or trees. Glue or tape one of each type to a paper bag. Talk about the leaves and describe them. Compare them to each other. Then let the child try to sort them into the paper bags. Another activity the child might enjoy is to classify them in groups based on size—small, medium, and large.

(Sorting, classifying and comparisons are important math skills. This game also fosters vocabulary development. Organizing things helps the child gain a sense of control of their environment which fosters confidence and self-esteem.)

3-5 Years—Collecting

As children notice similarities and differences, they enjoy collecting things from nature. Parents can help direct them to collecting things that do no harm to the environment. Children may enjoy collecting leaves, interesting sea shells on a beach, or pretty stones.

(Collecting and talking about the objects gathered promotes language development and observation skills and helps with beginning concepts of comparisons and classification.)

2-5 Years—Nature Puppets

Basic science concepts can be conveyed using puppets. A bee puppet might land on an artificial flower and pick up nectar on its back legs. A flower puppet can sprout from a flower pot.

(Children can learn basic science concepts from watching and playing with nature puppets.)

Part 3

Appendices

THE NEW WISCONSIN PROMISE

In communities across our state, we must have a shared sense of responsibility in addressing the adverse effects of poverty in the education of our children. Schools must build exciting, challenging programs that are creative and diverse in the way we teach children. The classroom of today is not what we had in the past and not what we will have in the future.

Now, more than ever, closing the achievement gap must become our number-one priority, the economic engine for ensuring long-term security for our state and for our citizens.

Our common ground is our New Wisconsin Promise—our commitment to ensure the opportunity of a quality education for every child.

- Closing the achievement gap between economically disadvantaged students or children of color and their peers.
- Quality teachers in every classroom and strong leadership in every school.
- Improving student achievement with a focus on reading and a balanced literacy standard that has all students reading at grade level.
- Investing in early learning opportunities through the four-year-old kindergarten, Preschool to Grade 5, and SAGE class size reduction programs.
- Shared responsibility -- increasing parental and community involvement in our schools and libraries to address teenage literacy, drop-outs and truancy.
- Career and Technical Education as a comprehensive strategy to involve students in becoming active citizens by better understanding their role in the family, society, and the world of work.

Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent



For more information on the *New Wisconsin Promise*, go to:
www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/sprntdnt/nwp/nwp.html

TIPS FOR SELECTING GOOD BOOKS FOR BEGINNING READERS

Note: Much of the information in this section comes from a presentation made at a Wisconsin Library Conference by Margaret Jensen, a reading specialist with the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Books intended for beginning readers are often called “easy readers.” They have what is referred to as a “controlled vocabulary.” This means that the words are likely to be among the first words children learn by sight, or are very easy for beginning readers to “sound out” using a simple phonetic approach. Many books classified as “easy readers” do not include appropriate design elements that really make it easy on the eyes to read the text. Older children and adults who struggle with reading may also need books or text formatted in better ways. Librarians can evaluate books for young readers using the following characteristics that help make a book ideal for a new or struggling reader:

- Text should be large and very dark. A good font size is 16, or even 18, and a bold typeface makes the text very dark.
- There should be more white space than usual between each letter and each word. This allows the eye muscles frequent rests and cues the eyes that one word is ending and a new one is starting. An example of a font that does this is Courier.
- Extra white space at the end of a line and between lines helps the eyes drop down easily to the next line of text. Double spacing adds space between lines.
- It helps if the text does not use the granny “g” which is the typical way a lower case “g” appears in print, but it is not the way the child learns to write it.
- It helps comprehension if an entire thought or sentence is completed in one line, rather than continuing on the next line.

Example of how this might look on a page:

Today is Nick’s birthday.

He is eight years old.

Nick is going to have a party.

There are many excellent trade books that are not labeled as beginning readers yet are good choices. Books that include rhythm, rhyme, repetition, and a text with clear context and picture clues are also very appropriate for beginning readers. When children begin to read, they sometimes think they can only read certain types of books when, in fact, there are many trade books that they can read as easily as “beginning reader” books.

A book with a steady rhythm to the text helps the young reader use the beat to move along with the words. Text with simple rhyme gives the child a clue as to the ending of the final word. Repetition in text provides practice with the same words. Once the reader has read the words the first time, they have more confidence when they see the same words again. That part of the text becomes more familiar and comfortable for them and helps them tackle the new words.

Beginning readers should not be rushed into books with few pictures. Pictures are extremely important to the beginning reader. They help reduce the unknown. If the picture is of a cat, the reader knows the word is not likely to be “dog” or “pig”. Books that have simple sentences and a word or picture under a flap can be helpful because it gives eyes a chance to rest. The text and whatever is hidden under the flap combine to give the child encouragement to continue reading.

Beginning readers need to be able to read about 250 words a minute to understand the flow of a story. Children who struggle with each word focus so hard on the individual words that, by the time they get to the end of the sentence, they are unable to put it all together and understand the meaning of the words they have just decoded. By reading many beginning reader type books, children build up the speed they need to be a fluent reader.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PLA/ALSC EARLY LITERACY INITIATIVE

In 2004, the Public Library Association (PLA) and the Association for Library Services to Children (ALSC), both units of the American Library Association (ALA), published the results of an early learning study they commissioned in 2003. The following information was taken from their conclusions. For the full conclusions document, and also the full evaluation report, go to:

www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/researchandeval/researchevaluation.htm

Conclusions

The Early Literacy Initiative resulted in substantial changes in knowledge, skills, and behavior for parents, care givers, libraries, and the communities they serve. Some of the results are highlighted below.

Outcomes for Parents

- Parents in all three age groups made very significant gains in frequency of sharing books with their children. Parents particularly appreciated learning about the research on early literacy development and shared the information from the session with others.
- The largest gains were made by parents of 0-23-month-olds. The most dramatic change for this group of parents was in terms of their increased sharing of books. Sixteen percent increased the time they spent reading to babies weekly, and 24 percent increased the time they spent reading daily.
- Parents reported sharing books was more enjoyable for their children and themselves when they used the techniques for sharing books suggested in the sessions.
- Parents of 0-23-month-olds were the least likely to talk to their babies at the beginning of the program. This group increased the frequency of talking to their babies by 10.8 percent.
- Parents in all three age groups demonstrated gains in their use of public libraries. Parents of 0-23-month-olds increased library use 22.4 percent, and parents of 2-3 year-olds increased library use by a 23.1 percent. There was a 7.3 percent increase for parents of 4-5 year-olds.
- Parents of 2-3 year-olds reported a 14 percent increase in encouraging their children to name objects in pictures of books. They also increased their frequency of asking general questions as a way of getting children to say more than one word at a time by 13.2 percent.
- Parents of 4-5 year-olds reported a 15.8 percent gain in talking about letters and sounds daily. They increased the time they spent playing word games daily by 18.2 percent. These parents increased the time they spent helping their children build vocabulary through reading books by 13.5 percent daily.

Results Related to Teen Parents

- The study indicates that library efforts to assist parents of young children with activities that foster early learning can be especially effective with teen parents. Teen parents of 0-23 month olds and 2-3 year-olds lagged behind older parents in using early literacy behaviors initially. They made very substantial gains as a result of their participation in the early literacy sessions.
- Teen parents of 0-23-month-olds increased book sharing by 30.5 percent compared with the average 16.0 percent increase for the older parent groups. Teen parents of 2-3 year-olds increased book sharing by 17.6 percent compared with the 10.1 average increase of the other groups.
- Teen parents use of the library exceeded the average gains of all parent groups. There was a 26.4 percent increase for teen parents compared with 22.4 percent for all parents of 0-23 month olds. Teen parents of 2-3 year-olds increased library use by 41.2 percent compared with 23.1 percent for all parents of 2-3 year-olds.
- Teen parents of 2-3 year-olds outpaced other parents in gains in asking general questions—23.5 percent increase compared with 13.2 percent for older parents.

Results Based on Parents' Education

- Parents' education was an important predictor of using literacy behaviors at intake. Those with some high school shared books less frequently at the beginning (75.7 percent) but increased to 97 percent. Parents with some high school increased library usage by 15 percent.
- Low-education parents of 0-23 year-olds trailed in talking to their babies initially but increased by 20.2 percent.
- Parents of 2-3 year-olds with some high school or a high school degree made greater than average gains in encouraging their children to name objects; those with some high school gained 13.5 percent; and those with a high school degree 12.5 percent.
- Parents of 2-3 year-olds with some high school or a high school degree also asked general questions less frequently at the beginning of the program but made substantial gains.
- Parents of 4-5 year-olds with only a high school diploma helped their children build vocabulary at lower rates than average at the start of the program, and the gap remained at end of the program.

Results Based on Parents' Income

- Parents' income was a factor involved in the amount of time they spent in sharing books at the start of the program. Low-income parents made impressive gains during the project. There was an 11.8 percent increase in the number of parents sharing books at the end of the study.
- Low-income parents closed the gap in their monthly library use by increasing 39.3 percent at the end of the program. Low-income parents of 2-3 year-olds increased library use by 30 percent. Low-income parents of 4-5 year-olds increased library use by 52.9 percent.
- Low-income parents of 0-23 month olds increased talking to their babies about objects in their surroundings by 12.6 percent.
- Low-income parents of 4-5 year-olds raised their frequency of helping their children build vocabulary by 10.6 percent.

Results Based on Parents' Ethnic Background

- Black and other-race parents used several literacy behaviors less frequently at intake than white parents but made substantial gains after attending early literacy sessions. One area of improvement was reading to their children. As a result of participation there was a 54.2 percent increase for black parents of 0-23 month olds who read daily to their babies. Other-race parents of 0-23 month olds increased book sharing by 21.7 percent. White parents of 0-23 month olds increased book sharing by 10.5 percent.
- There were only modest increases in the percentages of black and other race parents of 2-3 year-olds in terms of increased book sharing.
- There were significant gains for black and white parents in terms of increased use of public libraries but not for other-race parents. Black parents of all three age groups increased library use by 25 percent; there was a 24.3 percent increase for white parents. Other-race parents' library use declined by 5 percent.
- The percentage of black parents of 0-23 month olds who talked to their babies rose 12.5 percent compared to a 10.5 percent increase for white parents.
- Black parents of 4-5 year-olds increased playing word games by 22.2 percent compared with an 18.4 increase for white parents.

Results for Hispanic Parents

- The study indicates that appropriate outreach to Hispanic parents can have a significant impact. Hispanic parents used some literacy behaviors less frequently than non-Hispanic parents at initially, but they made gains after attending the sessions. Hispanic parents of 0-23 month olds increased book sharing 31.1 percent, compared with a 9 percent gain by non-Hispanic parents. In terms of increased use of public libraries, Hispanic parents of 4-5 year-olds rose 30 percent, compared with a 0.1 gain by non-Hispanic parents.
- All Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents of 2-3 year-olds encouraged their children to name objects at intake and follow-up, but Hispanic parents' daily use rose 12.5 percent, just below the increase of 13.9 percent for non-Hispanic parents.
- Hispanic parents of 2-3 year-olds increased their frequency of asking general questions by 11.8 percent, slightly less than non-Hispanics who increased by 13.8 percent. At intake, these parents lagged behind significantly in encouraging children to name objects and asking general questions. In their comments, they

described difficulty in reading English. After the sessions, they reported “talking the pictures” in Spanish even if the books were written in English, singing in Spanish, and mixing Spanish and English. They expressed their concerns for assuring that their children retained their native language; but they also wanted them to be ready to learn in a school where they would be required to use English. Parents asked for booklists and programs in Spanish or programs with interpreters.

Outcomes for Care Givers

- At the beginning of the program, care givers reported very high levels of sharing books. This may explain why there was not significant growth for this group as a result of the training. In addition, about two-thirds of the care givers, for whom educational levels are reported, had at least some college education.
- However, as a result of the sessions, care givers significantly increased their public library usage. Care givers of 0-23 month olds increased usage 15.6 percent and care givers of 2-3 year-olds increased library use by 9.6 percent. There was only a 1.7 percent increase for care givers of 4-5 year-olds, perhaps because many were already using the library. Some care givers indicated they made regular visits to the library, without the children in their care, to check out books. Some noted the difficulty of getting the children in their care to the library.
- Care givers were pleased that the library reinforced the messages they had already given parents. They urged the libraries to continue to share the information with parents and to provide them with book lists and activities they could pass along to parents.
- Care givers particularly appreciated the librarian’s modeling of exciting book sharing techniques, book lists which helped them know which books to use with each age group, books to browse through at the sessions, and free books given to them as part of the training. Care givers reported book sharing was more enjoyable for their children and themselves when they used the methods of sharing books suggested in the sessions.
- Care givers of 0-23 month olds and of 2-3 year-olds reported the sessions did give them new ways to think about this behavior and new strategies to use with the children in their care
- The intake process indicated most care givers of 4-5 year-olds already included activities such as introducing children to letters/letter sounds/letter names, playing word games with children, or helping children build vocabulary through reading books.
- Care givers with higher levels of early childhood training more frequently shared books and played word games at intake. The care givers with less formal training, made larger gains as a result of attending the sessions. Care givers of 2-3 year-olds with training increased their book sharing by 3.3 percent. There was a 25 percent increase of book sharing by care givers of 2-3 year-olds who had less training. Care givers with less training increased their use of word games by 8.3 percent.
- At the beginning of the study, care givers with higher levels of professional training more frequently shared books, asked general questions, introduced letter sounds, played word games, and helped children build vocabulary. Those with less training made substantial gains in incorporating some of these techniques in their centers. Care givers of 2-3 year-olds with less training increased book sharing by 20 percent. This group of care givers did not increase the time they spent asking general questions. Care givers of 4-5 year-olds with less training increased their frequency of introducing letters by 7.1 percent and increased playing word games by 42.9 percent. This group of care givers also increased their frequency of vocabulary building activities by 3.4 percent.
- Care givers particularly appreciated learning about the research on early literacy development and shared the information from the session with others. Care givers wanted more: “More information. More training. More programs. More time to talk and interact. More information about dialogic reading.” Many asked for more information on puppets and flannel boards and ways to share books and develop literacy.
- Care givers indicated a need for programs and booklists in Spanish, as well as interpreters during programs. They also said that the activities for the children should be in both English and Spanish so that parents and staff could both read it. They indicated an interest in programs and materials that addressed multicultural issues.

Impact on Libraries

- Libraries agreed that the most effective promotional channels for reaching the target audience of low-education, low-income parents were personal contact (face-to-face and on the phone) and third party endorsement through parents or via partner agencies.
- To reach their target audience, libraries worked successfully with a variety of partners, including schools, Head Start, teen parenting programs, county agencies, colleges, recent immigrants, a hospital, a corporation, and existing literacy initiatives.
- Libraries concluded that sessions held at locations where the target audience was located, usually outside the library, were most successful. The interviews with parents confirmed that many were not library users for one reason or another, so would not have been aware of programs if they were advertised in the library.

- Libraries, community partners, parents, and care givers agreed that adapting the information for parents and care givers who speak other languages is a pressing need
- Libraries made, or began to make, systemic changes in their organizations as a result of the early literacy initiative. They revitalized their story times, encouraging children's librarians to integrate literacy messages and activities into every program. They extended the impact of early literacy sessions by offering things for parents to take home—children's books, handouts, manipulatives, and full-length publications.

They integrated research-based early literacy practices into their staff and volunteer training and continuing education. They rethought the physical space allocated for young children, parents, and care givers, creating environments that support early learning and emergent literacy. They rearranged their collections. They plotted long-term strategies to more effectively inform parents of the research on early literacy development and how their effort is essential in their child's emergent literacy.

Impact on Communities

- Community partners recognized that libraries added value to their programs by bringing research on brain development and early literacy plus added energy and passion to the sessions and partnerships. They indicated library sessions offered easy-to-implement, practical strategies, and demonstrated how to use them. The partners recognized and valued the libraries' creativity—in designing materials, in meeting differing cultural and language needs, and solving problems confronting the partners.
- Community partners appreciated the books, booklists, and other publications from the library. They also appreciated the libraries' confirmation of their own messages to parents about early literacy development.

Part 4

Bibliographies and Resources

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SOURCES FOR PARENT HANDOUTS

Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning Handouts On Line for Parents

Reproducible parent handouts designed to reinforce the learning concepts for each of the programming units in this publication are available on line at: twww.dpi.wi.us/dltcl/pld/earlylearning.html.

These materials may be downloaded, copied, and customized by public libraries at no cost. These materials are written at approximately a fourth grade level, use simplified grammar, and short sentences. The layout of the sentences is designed to accommodate adults with learning disabilities as much as possible. They are intended for use with parents in the targeted groups of this project. Many of these parents may have trouble reading or reading in English. The parent groups include teen parents, parents living in poverty with young children, parents who do not speak English well, and parents who are incarcerated. Spanish translations of the handouts are also available at the same site. Most of the handouts are designed so that the Spanish version can be printed on the back of the English text if librarians want the two texts to appear together.

Libraries are asked to retain the credit line at the bottom for the Department of Public Instruction. Any questions about copying and use should be directed to the Youth and Special Needs Consultant at the Division for Libraries Technology, and Community Learning.

Many wonderful parent handouts on early learning and brain development are available at low or no cost from various agencies. A list of some web pages and other sources that offer free parenting resources is included below. Most of these resources are intended for the general public and although very well designed and attractive, may not be at the correct reading level to be used by parent groups targeted by this project. Of special note are the new resources for parents from the Public Library Association's Every Child Ready to Read promotion available on the American Library Association's web page.

Additional Sources for Parent Handouts and Resources

*Available in Spanish

American Library Association, Public Library Association www.ala.org/ala/pla

- **Every Child Ready to Read:** Parent Guide to Early Literacy Project www.ala.org/ala/pla/plaissues/earlylit/background/overviewearly.htm
- Early Talker, Newborn to 2 Years Color
- Early Talker, Newborn to 2 Years B&W
- Talker, 2 and 3 Year-Olds Color
- Talker, 2 and 3 Year-Olds B&W
- Pre-Reader, 4 and 5 Year-Olds Color
- Pre-Reader, 4 and 5 Year-Olds B&W

America Reads Challenge www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads

America Reads Challenge is a national campaign to help all children learn to read sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education in Washington DC.

- Ready*Set*Read Activities www.ed.gov/inits/americanreads/families.html
- Tips for Families as Their Children's First Teacher
- Getting to Know You: Activities for Young Babies
- Enjoying Our Company: Activities for Crawlers and Walkers

Babies Are Born Learning, Oregon's Child: Everyone's Business (OCEB)

www.nccic.org/ccpartnerships/profiles/oregon2.htm

OCEB is a state-wide collaboration of public and private partners working to increase awareness about the importance of healthy brain development. Tri-fold handouts in English or Spanish help parents understand ways to help their children birth to five years through play, reading, talking, listening, and showing respect for their children.

- Babies Are Born Learning/Los Bebés Aprenden Desde Que Nacen
- Developmental Resource Cards

Child Care Aware childcareaware.org/en/tools/pubs/pdf/112epdf

Child Care Aware, a program of NACCRRA, is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NACCRRA is the national network of more than 850 child care resource and referral centers (CCR&Rs) located in every state.

- Developing Language with Your Child childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol10/
- Food and Fitness-Making Healthy Habits a Family Affair childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol14/
- Let's Eat! Children and Healthy Eating Habits childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol6/
- Grandparents: Nearby, Faraway, and Raising Grandchildren childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol13/
- A Guide for Dads: Give Your Child an Early Lead in Life
- Quality Child Care childcareaware.org/en/tools/pubs/pdf/111e.pdf
- Helping Your Child Go Places Through Literacy childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol15/
- Family Routines and Rituals childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/vol5/
- The Kindergarten Connection childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/0498/
- *Learning to Read and Write Begins at Birth/El Aprender a Leer y Escribir Comienza al Nacer childcareaware.org/en/tools/pubs/pdf/112epdf
- New Research on Brain Development is Important to Parents childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/0397/
- Raising a Reader childcareaware.org/en/dailyparent/0299/

***Colorín Colorado.** colorincolorado.org/about.html

Reading Rocket, is an Educational Service of WETA, a public television station in Washington DC. Colorín Colorado is part of the Reading Rockets program which is a national educational service of WETA. Reading Rockets is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Colorín Colorado is a new bilingual Web site created especially for Spanish-speaking parents. It provides information, activities, and advice on helping children learn to read and succeed.

- What You Can Do At Home www.colorincolorado.org/home/index.html
- *Qué Se Puede Hacer *En el Hogar* www.colorincolorado.org/hogar/index.html
- Simple Ways to Encourage Learning www.colorincolorado.org/home/simpleways.html
- *Maneras Sencillas de Estimular el *Aprendizaje* www.colorincolorado.org/hogar/sencillas.html
- Fun and Effective Ways to Read with Children www.colorincolorado.org/home/funways.html
- *Maneras Divertidas y Eficaces de Leer con los Niños www.colorincolorado.org/hogar/divertidas.html

Early Words www.earlywords.net/about.html

Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon

The Early Words initiative was begun by the Commission on Children, Families & Community of Multnomah County in Portland Oregon in collaboration with many other agencies. Now the Multnomah County Library leads the Early Words initiative. Early Words promotes language and literacy development in young children.

- Beginning to Read Preschool through Grade 2
www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/Read_Write_Now/begin.html
- Early Years-Birth To Preschool www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/Read_Write_Now/early.html
- How Can I Improve My Child's Reading www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content/improve.reading.html
- How to Meet the America Reads Challenge: Read*Write*Now!
www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/Read_Write_Now/how2meet.html
- Simple Tips www.earlywords.net/tips.html
 - Talking
 - Easy Tips for Parents & Care givers
- Take and Use Activity www.earlywords.net/what_sample_take_use.html
- Why This Matters Brain Development www.earlywords.net/why_brain.html

I Am Your Child Foundation (IAYC) www.iamyourchild.org

IAYC located in Los Angeles, California, is a national, non-profit organization founded by actor/director Rob Reiner to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood development and school readiness. IAYC develops a wide variety of resources for parents, early childhood professionals, child advocates, health care providers, policymakers and the media.

- Why Early Childhood Matters www.iamyourchild.org/early.html
- Ten Tips for Effective Parenting www.iamyourchild.org/tips.html

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) www.naeyc.org

NAEYC located in Washington D.C. is the nation's largest and most influential organization of early childhood educators and others dedicated to improving the quality of programs for children from birth through third grade.

- Brain Development Research: What It Means for Young Children and Families
www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/1997/11.htm
- *Brochures for Parents www.naeyc.org/parent_resources/brochures.asp
 - Helping Children Learn Self-Control

- Love and Learn: Positive Guidance for Young Children
- Play is FUNdamental
- Raising a Reader, Raising a Writer
- Ready to Go: What Parents Should Know about School Readiness
- *Toys: Tools for Learning
- Early Years Are Learning Years www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/default.asp
 - Children Who Just Watch
 - Emotional Literacy
 - Helping Toddlers Become Problem Solvers
 - Learning Through Water Play
 - Put Reading First: Helping Your Child.
 - Learn to Read: A Parent Guide, Preschool–Grade 3.
 - Singing as a Teaching Tool

National Center for Family Literacy www.familit.org/Resources/ReadingTips/ParentsGuide/index.cfm
 NCFL is recognized worldwide as the leader in family literacy development. NCFL works with educators and community builders to meet the most urgent educational needs of disadvantaged families.

- *Age Appropriate Reading Tips
www.familit.org/Resources/ReadingTips/ParentsGuide/Age_Appropriate_Tips/index.cfm
- *Benefits of Reading to Children www.familit.org/Resources/Research/index.cfm
- *Hispanic Family Institute www.familit.org/ProgramsandInitiatives/HFLI/index.cfm
- *Parent's Guide to Reading with Your Child www.familit.org/Resources/ReadingTips/ParentsGuide/index.cfm
- Parent Reading Tips www.familit.org/Resources/ReadingTips/ParentsGuide/index.cfm
- *Reading is Brain Food www.familit.org/Resources/ReadingTips/ParentsGuide/Brain-Food.cfm
- Reading Through the Years www.familit.org/Publications/index.cfm
- *What Parents and Children Learn as They Read Books

National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) www.nifl.gov/nifl/publications.html

NIFL is administered by the Secretaries of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. Most NIFL's funds support programs and services designed to improve the quality of literacy programs nationwide.

- A Child Becomes a Reader: Birth Through Preschool
www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/publications/pdf/low_res_child_reader_B-K.pdf
- Partnership for Reading www.nifl.gov/nifl/pfr.html
 - Helping Your Child Learn to Read
 - The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read
 - A Child Becomes a Reader—Birth to Preschool
 - A Child Becomes a Reader—Kindergarten—Grade 2
- Parent Page, Parents as Teachers National Center www.patnc.org/forparents-parentspage.asp
 - *Age-Appropriate Tips at a Glance
 - *Choosing Books for Babies and Young Children
 - *Getting in the Game: Shape Your Child's Healthy Eating Habits
 - *Using Routines to Help Your Child Grow: Tips for Parents
 - *The Sound of Music - It's Not just Entertainment
 - *Reading is Brain Food
 - *Reading Together to Build Early Literacy

Reading is Fundamental (RIF) www.rif.gov

RIF has a contract with the U.S. Department of Education to operate the Inexpensive Book Distribution Program (IBDP) now supplemented with private funds. RIF programs operate in all 50 states.

- Printable Parent Guides www.rif.org/parents/resources/parentguide.msp
 - Choosing Good Books for Children of All Ages
 - Helping Your Children Become Readers
 - How to Get Preschoolers Excited About Reading
 - Reading Aloud to Your Children
 - RIF's Guide to Artistic Adventures
 - RIF's Guide to Picture Books
 - Your Baby, Toddler and Preschooler www.rif.org/parents/0_4.msp

Ready At Five Partnership www.readyatfive.org/resources/early.html

Ready At Five is a statewide, public/private organization in Maryland committed to increasing the number of children entering school ready to succeed. Ready At Five develops educational resources, provides public awareness campaigns, and offers technical assistance to local communities.

- Parent Tips www.readyatfive.org/resources/tips.html
 - Build Your Child's Brainpower!

- Help Your Child Get Along with Others!
- Help Your Child Learn About Numbers and Patterns!
- Help Your Child Learn About People!
- Help Your Child Learn To Communicate!
- Help Your Child to Grow Strong and Healthy!
- Know How Your Child Grows!
- What Does "Ready for School" Mean?
- Support Your Child's Physical Changes
- Your Child Is Learning To Discover
- Your Child Learns First From You
- Your Child Was Born Ready to Learn www.readyatfive.org/images/pdfs/pmcardtalk.pdf
- It's Never Too Early To Start Talking to Your Child www.readyatfive.org/images/pdfs/pmcardread.pdf
- School Readiness Activity Boxes www.readyatfive.org/activities/activity_box.html

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Inc. www.wccf.org

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Inc., is a child and family advocacy agency. Headquartered in Madison and Milwaukee, the council's mission is to promote the well-being of children and families in Wisconsin by advocating for effective and efficient health, education, and human service delivery systems.

- *Great Beginnings www.wccf.org/projects/beginnings.html
 - *The First Years Last Forever brochure
 - *Great Beginnings bookmarks (This item is available in Hmong.)
 - 5 Reasons Why the First 3 Years Are So Important
 - 7 Ways To Build Your Baby's Brain Power

Zero To Three, Early Head Start National Resource Center www.ehsnrc.org/InformationResources/Index.htm

U.S. Department of Health and Family Services, Washington DC.

- Brain Development: Brain Wonders www.zerotothree.org/brainwonders/
- Developmental Milestones www.zerotothree.org/ztt_parentAZ.html
- Healthy Minds www.zerotothree.org/ztt_parentAZ.html
- Starting Smart www.zerotothree.org/ztt_parentAZ.html
- Parent Tip of the Week www.zerotothree.org/ztt_parentAZ.html

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www.beginwithlove.com/begin_with_love.html

I Am Your Child Foundation. *Early Childhood Matters* 30 min. New Screen Concepts. Videocassette. Los Angeles, CA: Reiner Foundation. www.iamyourchild.org/

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South Carolina Educational Television. 1999. *Bah Bah Be-Bop*. 54 min. Videocassette. Columbia, SC: South Carolina ETV/ERN. www.naeyc.org/shoppingcart/Itemdetail.aspx?Stock_No=810

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Web Sites with Information on Brain Development

Better Brains for Babies (BBB) Initiative www.fcs.uga.edu/outreach/coopex/bbb/
Cooperative Extension Services, University of Georgia. Atlanta, Georgia.

BBB is a collaboration of public and private organizations dedicated to promoting awareness and education about the importance of early brain development.

- What You Need To Know www.fcs.uga.edu/outreach/coopex/bbb/needtoknow/f_needtoknow.htm
 - Brain Basics
 - Attachment
 - Effects of Environment
 - Child Development
 - Current Research

Head Start Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/index.htm
Head Start and Early Head Start are federal programs offering comprehensive child development programs. They serve children from birth to age 5, pregnant women, and their families.

- Child Development an Internet Pathfinder www.headstartinfo.org/infocenter/inetwork.htm
 - Early Years Are Learning Years www.naeyc.org/resources/eyly/default.asp
 - Emotional Literacy
 - Singing as a Teaching Tool
 - Helping Toddlers Become Problem Solvers
 - Learning Through Water Play
 - Children Who Just Watch

National Childcare Information Center (NCCIC) www.nccic.org

NCCIC is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance center linking parents, providers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public to early care and education information. It partners with the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Regional Offices to promote children's learning by improving the quality of early care and education.

- Resources on Brain Development Research www.nccic.org/poptopics/brain.html
- Resources on Prevention www.nccic.org/poptopics/prevention.html
- *Child Development nccic.org/user/providers.html#childdev
 - Brain Development
 - Mental Health Needs of Young Children

Oregon's Child: Everyone's Business (OCEB) www.oceb.org

OCEB is a state-wide collaboration of public and private partners working to increase awareness about the importance of healthy brain development .

- Babies Are Born Learning
- Developmental Resource Cards
- Help Your Child Learn Through Love and Play

Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc. (PAT) www.patnc.org/forparents-parentspage.asp

PAT is an international early childhood parent education and family support program serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten, usually age 5.

- *Parent's Page www.patnc.org/forparents-parentspage.asp
 - The Sound of Music—It's Not Just Entertainment
 - On the Road to Reading
 - Reading Together to Build Early Literacy
 - Look Who's Listening to You!

***Ready for Life www.readyforlife.org**

Ready for Life is a special project of KERA, a public radio and television station in Dallas, Texas The project developed a series of curriculum modules to address three key elements of emotional development: Temperament, Attachment, and Socialization.

- *Beginnings: Brains Need To Be Fed Too www.readyforlife.org/Beginnings/
- *Feeling Loved: A Practical Guide to Attachment www.readyforlife.org/FeelingLoved/
- *Getting Along: A Practical Guide To Socialization www.readyforlife.org/GettingAlong/
- *Who is My Child? A Practical Guide to Temperment www.readyforlife.org/WhoIsMyChild/

RESOURCES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, EMERGENT LITERACY, AND SCHOOL SUCCESS

Print Resources on the Relationship between Language Development, Emergent Literacy, and School Success

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Videos on the Relationship between Language Development, Emergent Literacy, and School Success

- *I Am Your Child Foundation. 2000. Ready to Learn/Listos Para Aprender. 24 min. Videocassette. Los Angeles, CA: Reiner Foundation. www.iamyourchild.org
- *Multhnomah County Library. 1996. *Born to Succeed/La Llave del Exito*. 12 min. Videocassette. Portland, OR. www.multcolib.org/about/mcl-ecrvideos.html
- *Multhnomah County Library. 2004. *Success Starts With Reading*. 12 min. Videocassette. Portland, OR. www.multcolib.org/about/mcl-ecrvideos.html
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Web Sites on the Relationship between Language Development, Emergent Literacy, and School Success

Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc. (PAT) www.patnc.org/forparents-parentspage.asp
 PAT is an international early childhood parent education and family support program..

- *Parent's Page www.patnc.org/forparents-parentspage.asp
 - *-The Sound of Music - It's Not Just Entertainment
 - *-On the Road to Reading
 - *-Reading Together to Build Early Literacy
 - *-On the Road To Literacy: Learning to Write

Scientific Learning www.scilearn.com/

Scientific Learning combines the latest advances in brain research and technology to create products and services that develop learning and communication skills.

Brain Connection www.brainconnection.com

- Finding a Voice: Perspectives on Language Acquisition
www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/language-acquisition
- Getting Ready for School: Pencils, Notebook, Positive Attitude
www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/emotion-ready
- Evolution of Language www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/evolution-language
- How the Brain Hears Language [/www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/listening-skills](http://www.brainconnection.com/topics/?main=fa/listening-skills)
- Overview of Reading and Literacy Initiatives
www.brainconnection.com/offsite/?offsite_url=http://www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/r_overview.htm&offs_ite_title=Overview+of+Reading+and+Literacy+Initiatives
- Neuroscience, Phonology and Reading: The Oral to Written Language Continuum
www.brainconnection.com/library/?main=genhome/reading-language

Talaris Research Institute www.talaris.org/index.htm

Talaris was awarded a grant from the Center for Mind, Brain and Learning from the University of Washington for an interdisciplinary project to explore and communicate the brain's innate capabilities.

- Focus on Early Literacy Parenting Counts a Focus on Early Learning www.talaris.org/
- Getting in Tune with Baby www.talaris.org/synopsis.htm
- Research Spotlights www.talaris.org/synopsis.htm

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STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVES

Colorado www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/Childrens_Literacy_Resources.htm

This site for the State Library Offices within the Colorado Department of Education has an Early Childhood Literacy summary research on infant brain development and includes links to other resources.

California literacyworks.org/clls/

California Library Literacy Services has a Family for Literacy page with parent resources that includes a bibliography of parenting materials related to reading.

Florida http://dilis.dos.state.fl.us/bld/Youth_services/BLD_youth.html

The Florida Division of Libraries and Information Services expanded its "Born To Read" program into the "I'm A Reader" initiative, which is in its second year in 2004. Parents of newborns receive materials about reading to babies through Florida hospitals. Florida is also a participant in the national "Prime Time Family Reading" literacy program, founded by the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

Georgia www.georgialibraries.org/lib/child/BFB/

Books for Babies Facts, Tools and Resource Kit is a set of materials prepared by the Georgia Public Library Service that public libraries give to mothers of new babies. The site includes ideas for public libraries to use in encouraging parents to read to infants.

Hawaii www.alulike.org/services/library.html

The Native Hawaiian Library's 'Ohana (Family) Literacy Program targets Native Hawaiian children and families. The program teaches reading-related activities to parents who have children ages birth to five. The instruction includes information related to bi-lingual language development, creating low-cost literacy activities, and fostering readiness skills.

Idaho www.lili.org/read/readtome/

Read To Me is an early literacy initiative of the State Library of Idaho which provides information, training, technical assistance, and resources for Idaho libraries and their community partners.

Iowa www.silo.lib.ia.us/for-ia-libraries/youth-services/early-childhood-literacy.html

The Early Childhood Literacy page for the State Library of Iowa has links to resources on infant brain development and early learning. The State Library coordinates its efforts with the Department of Education on a "Getting Ready to Read" program.

Maryland www.saharainc.net/MSDE/

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Library Development and Services has a campaign called "...It's Never Too Early" which provides information to help parents be their child's first teachers.

The site includes fact sheets and press releases that follow up on a state-wide training campaign coordinated by the division.

Missouri www.risetraining.org and www.huronline.org

The Missouri Department of Education, the Missouri State Library, and other partners worked together to provide early childhood training for educators, parents, and librarians. "Heads UP! Reading" is an early literacy course based on the National Research Council's study, "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children." As a follow up to the training, individual libraries and educators held abbreviated training sessions for parents that focused on talking, playing, reading, and writing activities for their children.

Oregon <http://library.state.or.us/home/libdev/r2r/r2r.html>

The Oregon State Library site includes information on model "Ready to Read" grant projects that include those targeted for very young children.

Pennsylvania www.statelibrary.state.pa.us/libraries/cwp/view.asp?a=15&Q=47855 and www.palibraries.com/bestprac.htm

The report, *Role of Public Libraries in Children's Literacy Development: An Evaluation Report*, is a summary of a study done by the Office of Commonwealth Libraries in Pennsylvania. The study examines the effect library preschool and summer programs have on emergent literacy. The "Learning Starts Here!" site includes a report on the delivery of pre-literacy services to Pennsylvania's youngest citizens, their families and care givers.

South Carolina www.state.sc.us/scsl/lib/chilserv.html

The Early Childhood Teacher Resource Video Collection is a catalog of videocassettes on early childhood development and education. The catalog is maintained by the South Carolina State Library. The collection is

designed to help child care center staff and other teachers of young children learn about how to best help children learn and grow.

Texas www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/projects/childcare/index.html and www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/readbunny/

The Public Library-Head Start Partnership for Early Childhood Education and Family Literacy within the Texas State Library works to encourage public libraries and Head Start grantees to collaborate actively to promote literacy between Head Start children and their families. The "Read To Your Bunny" campaign began in 1995 and includes resources featuring Rosemary Well's artwork.

Virginia

The State Library of Virginia is in the process of working on a statewide literacy website that will act as a clearinghouse on literacy information. There is a state-wide effort to bring all library literacy services under the umbrella of "Growing Readers." The initiative will include training for librarians and a public awareness campaign.

Washington www.kcls.oth/sm/index.cfm and www.secstate.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/early_learning.aspx

The Early Learning Initiative was a three-year project designed the Washington State Library to educate public library staff about emerging brain research in children from birth through preschool age. It advanced programs for young children and their care givers and encouraged partnerships between libraries and other community groups with similar services. More than 234,000 of the "Read to Your Baby" booklets translated into Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Russian were distributed.

Wisconsin www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/earlylearning.html

The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning began the Early Learning Initiative for Wisconsin Public Libraries in 2003. This site is the online version of a publication produced for the Initiative and can be used by public libraries without cost. A set of reproducible parent handouts is included.

Public Library Early Learning Initiatives

Baltimore, Maryland www.babyboosters.org

The "Baby Boosters" program circulates kits of library materials for babies. Training is offered for day care providers and volunteers to teach them how to do developmentally appropriate activities and stories. The site includes links to information on development for infants and offers tips for parents.

Houston, Texas Early Literacy Programs www.hpl.lib.tx.us/youth/earlylit.html

The Houston Public Library in Texas offers several early learning programs. They participate in the national programs "Born To Read" sponsored by ALA and have expanded that into the "Reach Out and Read" program in conjunction with the Houston Department of Health and Social Services. Their Houston Chronicle Parent Reading Program (HCPRP) is a family-oriented approach to addressing intergenerational literacy. HCPRP includes parents, child care givers and their pre-schoolers. It accommodates both English and non-English speaking parents. Also, the library offers a "Your Baby Can Read" Playgroup, which is a free weekly one and a half hour multi-sensory program that helps parents teach early literacy skills to their infants and toddlers. This year-round bilingual program is offered at five Houston Public Library Branches.

Middle Country Public Library, Long Island, New York Family Place www.mcpl.lib.ny.us/familyplace.html

The Middle Country Public Library in Suffolk County, Long Island, New York serves as coordinator for The Family Place project. It consists of a network of children's librarians nationwide who believe literacy begins at birth and libraries can help build healthy communities by nourishing healthy families. As part of their services the staff conduct training on how to create spaces where young children and their care givers can play and learn together.

Mother Goose Programs™ www.mothersgoosprograms.org

The Vermont Center for the Book created eleven Mother Goose Programs. The center provides training and sells the materials for the programs. The program uses high quality children's books and links the literature to mathematics, science and the environment. Among the libraries using the program are the Howard County Library, Maryland, the Houston Public Library, Texas, and the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services.

Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon www.earlywords.net/about.html

Early Words is coordinated by the Multnomah County Library in Portland Oregon. The organization promotes language and literacy development in young children. It strives to inform parents and other care givers that the first years of life are critical to building the foundation for learning to read. The Early Words initiative was begun by the Commission on Children, Families and Community of Multnomah County in Portland, Oregon, in collaboration with many other agencies. The library now leads the Early Words initiative. There are several free resources available at the site.

Pennisula Community Foundation, San Francisco, California Raising A Reader www.raisingareader.org

Raising A Reader began as a project of the San Mateo County Library project in California. It has since spread to libraries, child care centers, Head Starts, teen mother, and home visiting nurse programs in twenty-four states, as well as other countries. The program is designed to fit within existing family support systems. It inspires illiterate or limited English-speaking families to "book-cuddle" with their little ones and develop a love of books that lasts a lifetime. It is now a nonprofit organization supported by the Pennisula Community Foundation in the San Francisco Bay area.

Reach Out And Read (ROAR) www.reachoutandread.org

Reach Out and Read was founded by the former Boston City Hospital in Massachusetts. The intent was to make pediatric care a starting point for literacy promotion. Doctors in the program encourage parents to read to their infants and toddlers. There are ROAR programs in all fifty states. Among the libraries that participate are the Cuyahoga County Public Library in Ohio, the Multnomah County Library in Oregon, and the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library in California.

